

December 1st, 2021

Hon. Ernie Steeves
Minister of Finance and the Treasury Board
Chancery Place
P. O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

Re: ANBL Policies Affecting the Viability and Growth of Local Craft Breweries

Dear Minister Steeves:

We are writing you today as a follow-up to the series of meetings you and other government officials have attended throughout the past year, and ahead of the sixth and final scheduled meeting with the New Brunswick Craft Alcohol Producers Association (hereinafter “NBCAPA”). Thank you for continuing to engage with the business community so that the public and private sectors can best work together to move the province forward.

Chambers from across the province wrote in November of 2020 “If New Brunswick is to effectively have a monopoly in the alcohol distribution business, we know that we can agree that policies enacted by ANBL should, at a minimum, not actively harm private-sector growth.” “It would behoove governments at all levels to make it the normal practice to work with the private sector to craft policies and procedures in the first place. With a true business lens, all arms of government should take the position of supporting startups and local businesses and ‘default to yes’ wherever possible.”

Through consultation with the NBCAPA as well as individual craft beer, wine, and liquor producers, we remain concerned with the implementation of policies by ANBL as referenced in the November 2020 letter referenced above and attached. It is our position that proceeding with these policies will do severe damage to an emerging sector, which, according to a January 2021 economic impact analysis prepared by economist Pierre-Marcel Desjardins, has a projected growth of 47%, and an estimated \$35 million contribution to the GDP.

Some of the key policy decisions that are causing our organizations concern include:

- housing craft products in a central warehouse in Fredericton
- industry estimates 46 % of their products will be removed from ANBL shelves with the new minimum product sales requirements
- the planned move from 90 to 270 days to have a product listed with ANBL will mean that small producers are disincentivized to innovate, will be unable to move quickly to adapt to customer demand, and in many cases will simply be guessing at crop yields and the resulting products – not exactly a recipe for success.

We write you today, ahead of the sixth and final scheduled meeting on December 2nd, with a simple ask:

the creation of an advisory council which would provide oversight and private sector input mechanism for dispute resolution and to advise on policy. While ANBL may not be responsible for economic development, it is undeniable that policy decisions by (or on behalf of) the organization do have significant and tangible impacts on private-sector economic growth

Your government has often recognized that while the private sector creates economic growth and jobs, the government's role is to create conditions where this growth can flourish. The provincial government can support the continued growth and success of this emerging sector, which is not only geographically diversified, and an important contributor to local economies, but is also far reaching in its economic spinoff, be it tourism, agriculture, exports, or community assets.

We remain available to discuss this policy at your convenience,

Sincerely

John Wishart
Chief Executive Officer
Chamber of Commerce for Greater Moncton

Krista Ross
Chief Executive Officer
Fredericton Chamber of Commerce

David Duplisea
Chief Executive Officer
The Saint John Region Chamber of Commerce

Cathy Pelletier
Executive Director
Chambre de commerce d'Edmundston

Julie Pinette
Executive Director
Chambre de commerce Chaleur

Eric Normandeau
President
La Chambre de commerce et du tourisme du Grand Caraquet

Carol Alderdice
President and CEO
Tourism Industry Association of New Brunswick

Lisa Ashworth
President
Agricultural Alliance of NB

Maxime Gauvin
Executive Director
Really Local Harvest

Gaetan Thomas
CEO
Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick

Cc:

Hon. Blaine Higgs, Premier, Province of New Brunswick

Hon. Arlene Dunn, Minister Responsible, Economic Development and Small Business, Opportunities New Brunswick, and Immigration, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs

Hon. Margaret Johnson, Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

Hon. Tammy Scott-Wallace, Minister of Tourism, Heritage and Culture

Hon. Ted Flemming, Minister of Justice and Public Safety

Lori Stickles, President and CEO, ANBL