

VBA Legislative Update – Week 4 February 7, 2026

→ Update on VBA Issues

VBA Priority Legislation. On Thursday, February 5, the House Government Operations committee met to hear testimony from the Vermont Wholesale Beverage Association. Ryan Chaffin from Farrell spoke on behalf of the VWBA. You can read his testimony [here](#).

With regard to [H.672](#), VBA’s priority legislation, Ryan said:

I want to start by saying that we have no major concerns with H.672 and understand the desire to remove burdens for smaller brewers, given the challenges to the market I’ve described and that we all face. We want smaller brewers to be successful, and we encourage and support their right to self-distribution. We see value in breweries starting off on their own to better understand the market and have direct relationships with retailers. We cannot represent everybody, as those are business decisions we must make. We wish them well and cheer them on, even as competitors...

He went on to say that the VWBA thinks that the threshold of 5000 bbls for self-distribution is “excessive” and should be lowered. He did not suggest what the amount should be. He also asked that language be added to clarify that brewers under a franchise contract would not be allowed to self-distribute unless agreed to by the parties to the contract.

Overall, it was very helpful that the VWBA did not object to H.672. Lawmakers definitely took note. If you see Ryan, make sure to thank him!

The committee also discussed what provisions they want to include in their miscellaneous (or omnibus) alcohol bill. They basically decided to **begin with** including all provisions from H.647, H.655, H672, and H.832 - and then take further testimony. (**Please find brief summaries of these 4 bills below**) The two major outstanding issues are:

- From H.672 - What should the threshold for self-distribution be?
- From H.832 - Should the number of 4th class license locations be increased from 1 to 10 as requested by the Spirits Council.

The committee will be taking more testimony next [Wednesday afternoon](#). Witness will include:

- Levi Kraemer, Co-owner and Head Brewer, Kraemer and Kin
- Ehren Hill, Owner, The Blackback Pub
- Chris Kesler, Vice President, Distilled Spirits Council of Vermont

Levi and Ehren will be speaking directly to H.672, supporting the concept of the bill and reinforcing the need for the 5000bbls threshold. Chris will be addressing H.832, but will also put a plug in for H.672.

→ **Summary of the 4 bills that will be combined into the Miscellaneous Alcohol Bill:**

H.647 An act relating to vinous beverage manufacturers and fourth-class licenses

Sponsor: Rep Boyden

Summary: This bill proposes to increase the allowable **total volume** of alcoholic beverages that may be served for consumption at a tasting room (does not apply to farmers markets) by a licensee.

- at a tasting room and retail shop, not more than:
 - an aggregate total of 16 ounces of malt beverages or hard cider (current law is 8 ounces);
 - an aggregate total of 12 ounces of vinous beverages or ready-to-drink spirits beverages (current law is 8 ounces); and
 - one-quarter ounce of spirits or fortified wine with a total of two ounces (current law is 1 ounce).

The bill also proposes to allow vinous beverage manufacturer the same right as a malt beverage manufacturer to operate two licensed establishments at their manufacturing facility or on land contiguous.

H.655— an act relating to alcoholic beverages and the Board of Liquor and Lottery

Sponsor: Reps Boyden and Birong

Summary: This bill proposes a variety of amendments including:

- Changes the term for LL Board members from 2 to 4 years
- Removes the restriction on hours of operation for sale for off-premise consumption (was 10am – 11pm) and aligns with all other liquor sales under DLL rules.
- Some other minor, housekeeping changes to law.

H.672 - An act relating to distribution of malt beverages by licensed manufacturers

Sponsor: Rep. Boyden

Summary: This bill would allow malt beverage manufacturers to distribute up to 5000 barrels of malt beverage annually.

H. 832 - An act relating to fourth-class licenses and retail alcoholic beverage tasting permits

Sponsor: Rep. Boyden

Summary:

- This bill would increase from **one to ten** the number of 4th class license locations that a licensed manufacturers would be allowed to sell alcoholic beverages *produced by other manufacturers*. At these locations, they may sell unopened beverages or serve them by the glass (with or without charge), provided the beverages are purchased on invoice from the producing manufacturers or rectifiers.
- This bill would also change the application deadline for a **retail alcoholic beverage tasting permit** from at least five days to at least one day before an event.

→ **Updates to the Bottle Bill.** As we have previously reported, the House Environment committee is again considering a bill that would make some major changes to the bottle redemption system.

The bill proposes numerous changes to Vermont’s beverage container redemption system. Most notably, it restructures the redemption system by requiring **beverage container manufacturers** and distributors to participate in a newly formed producer responsibility organization (PRO). The PRO would be responsible for creating and implementing a stewardship plan that would manage the beverage container redemption system going forward. The Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) would oversee the organization and verify stewardship plan adherence.

Matt Chapman, Director of the Waste Management Division at the Department of Environmental Conservation **will be joining the GAC meeting on February 13 to explain the responsibilities of manufacturers in an EPR for beverage container program and to answer your questions.**

→ **Headlines of Note**

- [Vermont to Pursue ‘Junk Food Ban’ for Users of Food Stamps](#)
- [Windsor Sheriff Stripped of Law Enforcement Certification](#)
- [ICE Detains Steven Tendo, Ugandan Asylum Seeker](#)
- [Obsolete IT systems have cost Vermont child services funding — but no one knows how much](#)
- [Vermont is overhauling Act 250. Here’s what the development maps look like so far](#)
- [Vermont’s school enrollment is declining. Students needing special education are on the rise.](#)
- [House lawmaker’s proposed school consolidation map would combine 119 districts into 27](#)
- [How Donald Trump reshaped Vermont in just 1 year](#)
- [Vermont lawmakers consider plan to expand retail cannabis marketplace](#)
- [New BlueCross BlueShield CEO says 'we have an affordability crisis' in Vermont](#)

→ **VBA Bill Report.** Please keep in mind that bills introduced in 2025 are still technically alive and can be taken up for consideration. As bills begin to move, the report format will be updated to indicate bills that are moving.

Bill	Sponsors	Description	Status
H 637	Ian Goodnow; Rep. Martin LaLonde	An Act Relating to Operating A Vehicle Under the Influence of Alcohol or Other Substances This bill proposes to make several changes to the laws concerning operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or other substances.	Committees: House Judiciary Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Judiciary (01/09/26)
H 647	Rep. Lucy Boyden	An Act Relating to Vinous Beverage Manufacturers and Fourth-class Licenses	Committees: House Government Operations and Military Affairs

		<p>This bill proposes to allow the holder of a fourth-class license to serve customers larger total volumes of alcoholic beverages at a tasting room or retail shop operated by the licensee. This bill also proposes to allow manufacturers of vinous beverages to operate not more than two first-class licensed establishments that are located at the licensed manufacturing facility or on property that is owned by the licensee and contiguous with the parcel of land on which the licensed manufacturing facility...</p>	<p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (01/13/26)</p>
H 655	Rep. Lucy Boyden; Rep. Matthew Birong	<p>An Act Relating To Alcoholic Beverages And The Board Of Liquor And Lottery</p> <p>This bill proposes to amend various provisions of Title 7 to change the term length for members of the Board of Liquor and Lottery from three years to four years, eliminate the specific limitation on the hours of sale for licensees who sell alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 230, state that special events permits are subject to approval by the local control commissioners in conformance with the definition of "special event permit" in Title 7, eliminate language...</p>	<p>Committees: House Government Operations and Military Affairs</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (01/13/26)</p>
H 672	Rep. Lucy Boyden	<p>An Act Relating to Distribution of Malt Beverages by Licensed Manufacturers</p> <p>This bill proposes to authorize licensed malt beverage manufacturers to distribute malt beverages directly to the holders of first- or second-class licenses. This bill also proposes to limit the total amount of malt beverages that a licensed manufacturer may distribute directly to licensees on an annual basis.</p>	<p>Committees: House Government Operations and Military Affairs</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (01/14/26)</p>

H 832	Rep. Lucy Boyden	<p>An Act Relating to Fourth-class Licenses and Retail Alcoholic Beverage Tasting Permits</p> <p>This bill proposes to authorize licensed alcoholic beverage manufacturers, at not more than 10 fourth-class license locations, to sell alcoholic beverages produced by other manufacturers. This bill also proposes to amend the application requirements for retail alcoholic beverage tasting permits to allow a licensee to submit the application and fee at least one day before the proposed date of the tasting event.</p>	<p>Committees: House Government Operations and Military Affairs</p> <p>Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (01/29/26)</p>
S 236	Sen. Alison Clarkson; Sen. Richard Westman	<p>An Act Relating To Vinous Beverage Manufacturers and Fourth-class Licenses</p> <p>This bill proposes to allow the holder of a fourth-class license to serve customers larger total volumes of alcoholic beverages at a tasting room or retail shop operated by the licensee. This bill also proposes to allow manufacturers of vinous beverages to operate not more than two first-class licensed establishments that are located at the licensed manufacturing facility or on property that is owned by the licensee and contiguous with the parcel of land on which the licensed manufacturing facility...</p>	<p>Committees: Senate Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs</p> <p>Status: Read 1st time & referred to Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs (01/09/26)</p>
S 279	Sen. Kesha Ram Hinsdale; Sen. David Weeks; Sen. Patrick Brennan; Sen. Richard Westman	<p>An Act Relating to Caterer's Licenses and the Distribution of Malt Beverages by Licensed Manufacturers</p> <p>This bill proposes to authorize licensed malt beverage manufacturers to distribute malt beverages directly to the holders of first- or second-class licenses. This bill also proposes to limit the total amount of malt beverages that a licensed manufacturer may distribute directly to licensees on an annual basis. This bill also proposes to amend the definition of caterer's license to repeal the restriction on serving alcoholic beverages at first- or first- and third-class licensed locations.</p>	<p>Committees: Senate Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs</p> <p>Status: Read 1st time & referred to Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs (01/21/26)</p>