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## VBA Legislative Update – – Week 13 April 12, 2026

### → The Week Ahead for VBA

- [Senate Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs](#). The committee's [agenda](#) includes consideration of [H.921 An act relating to alcoholic beverages](#) on Thursday morning, April 16. The tentative witnesses are:
  - Wendy Knight, Commissioner, Department of Liquor and Lottery
  - Emma Arian, Vermont Brewers Association
  - Jesse Cronin,
  - Daren Orr,
  - Jennifer Kimmich, The AlchemistWe expect they will hear from spirits manufacturers, distributors and other witnesses on another day.
- [Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy](#). Senate Natural Resources [agenda](#) includes further consideration of [H.915, a bill that makes significant changes to Vermont's bottle redemption system](#). On Wednesday morning, April 15<sup>th</sup>, the committee will discuss the testimony they have heard to date and likely decide how they want to proceed.

### → Update on VBA Issues

**Miscellaneous Alcohol Bill.** See last week's update for a section-by-section breakdown of [H.921 An act relating to alcoholic beverages](#).

**ACTION ALERT.** If you have not already, please reach out to members of the **Senate Economic Development Committee** to urging support H.921, specifically Section 6 **which would allow Vermont manufacturers to directly distribute up to 3,000 barrels annually to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class establishments.**

- Sen. [Alison Clarkson](#), Chair, Windsor County, [aclarkson@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:aclarkson@leg.state.vt.us)
- Sen. [Randy Brock](#), Vice Chair, Franklin County, [rbrock@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:rbrock@leg.state.vt.us)
- Sen. [Kesha Ram Hinsdale](#), Chittenden County South, [kramhinsdale@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:kramhinsdale@leg.state.vt.us)
- Sen. [Thomas Chittenden](#), Chittenden County South, [tchittenden@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:tchittenden@leg.state.vt.us)
- Sen. [David Weeks](#), Rutland County, [dweeks@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:dweeks@leg.state.vt.us)

**You can also reach out to your local Senators** and urge them to support for [H.921 An act relating to alcoholic beverages](#). If the bill gets out of the Senate Economic Development Committee it will go to the Senate Floor where all Senators will vote on it. You can find your local Senator's contact info [here](#), or you can email ([oski@necrasongroup.com](mailto:oski@necrasongroup.com)) or text me (802-734-1508) and I will send you their contact.

### Talking Points for Section 6 of H.921:

- Section 6 of H.921 is a modest adjustment that reflects the realities of today's market. It gives small Vermont breweries a realistic way to access local accounts, grow their businesses, and remain viable in an increasingly consolidated distribution environment, while preserving the three-tier system.
- Neighboring states allow small manufacturers similar direct access to markets.
  - NH – In NH if you hold a Beverage Manufacturers License and you produce no more than 15,000 barrels annually; you may self-distribute up to 5,000 barrels annually to New Hampshire retailers without getting any special license. [Title XIII, Sec. 178:12 \(IV\)\(b\)](#)
  - ME - In Maine, if you hold a small brewery license (producing up to 30,000 barrels per year), you can sell your beer directly to licensed retailers (restaurants & stores) without needing to get a wholesale licensee. [Title 28-A, Sec. 1355-A \(3\)\(B\)\(2\)](#) (no maximum limit).
  - Allowing Vermont's small brewers to self-distribute up to 3,000 bbl annually ensures that businesses are not placed at a competitive disadvantage in the region.
- If manufacturers were allowed direct access of up to 3,000 barrels to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class establishments (bars, restaurants and stores), they would have the opportunity to grow their brand, possibly to the extent that they would be attractive to one of the large distributors.
- Adding self-distribution to an already time-consuming manufacturing business is a lot of work, however, it is the most cost-effective way for small brands to intentionally grow their business.
- While it is true that most small Vermont craft brewers won't reach the 3,000-barrel limit, most probably won't even come close, for the few that will, it could be decisive in their ability to grow enough to transition to a traditional distributor. While there is no "magic number" for a distributor to pick up a brand, 3,000 barrels is proof that a brand has the sort of production capability that could keep up with wider distribution.
- Over the past two years, three distributors have closed, leaving only three operating in Vermont (Baker, Farrell, and Vermont Wine Merchants). Should further consolidation occur, more brewers could find themselves without distribution options. Section 6 of H.921 would allow these brewers to get their product to market.
- Self-distribution as proposed would not impact distributors or brewers that have existing distribution contracts.

### → Headlines of Note

- [Reducing road salt could improve water quality and reduce rust. But what about slip-and-falls?](#)
- [Changes to Vermont's \\$70 million-plus IT overhaul could increase costs and delays](#)
- [Feds Demand Housing Agencies Check Residents' Citizenship Status](#)
- [Capitol Recap: When hospitals close services, who should have a say?](#)
- [Property tax relief legislation in Montpelier could drive taxes up in many districts](#)

- Rutland Regional Medical Center support staff vote to unionize

→ VBA Bill Report.

Bill	Sponsors	Description	Status
<a href="#">H 647</a>  ( <a href="#">now H.921</a> )	Rep. Lucy Boyden	An Act Relating to Vinous Beverage Manufacturers and Fourth-class Licenses  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...	Committees: House Government Operations and Military Affairs  Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (01/13/26)  <b>Folded into H.921 (see below)</b>
<a href="#">H 655</a>  ( <a href="#">now H.921</a> )	Rep. Lucy Boyden; Rep. Matthew Birong	An Act Relating To Alcoholic Beverages And The Board Of Liquor And Lottery  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...	Committees: House Government Operations and Military Affairs  Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (01/13/26)  <b>Folded into H.921 (see below)</b>
<a href="#">H 672</a>  ( <a href="#">now H.921</a> )	Rep. Lucy Boyden	An Act Relating to Distribution of Malt Beverages by Licensed Manufacturers  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.	Committees: House Government Operations and Military Affairs  Status: Read first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs (01/14/26)  <b>Folded into H.921 (see below)</b>

<p><a href="#">H 832</a>  <a href="#">(now H.921)</a> <a href="#">)</a></p>	<p>Rep. Lucy Boyden</p>	<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> <p><b>Folded into H.921 (see below)</b></p>
<p><a href="#">H.915</a></p>	<p>House Committee on Environment</p>	<p>An act relating to establishing an extended producer responsibility program for beverage containers</p> <p>This bill proposes to require all manufacturers and distributors of covered beverage containers to participate in a producer responsibility organization that shall manage the collection and disposition of beverage containers.</p>	<p>Committees: Senate Natural Resources and Energy</p> <p><b>Status:</b> <b>PASSED THE HOUSE</b></p>
<p><a href="#">H.921</a></p>	<p>House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs</p>	<p>An act relating to alcoholic beverages</p> <p>This bill proposes to amend various provisions of Title 7 related to the Board of Liquor and Lottery, fourth- class licenses, manufacturers of alcoholic beverages, special events permits, and special venue serving permits.</p>	<p>Committees: Senate Economic Development Housing and General Affairs</p> <p><b>Status:</b> <b>PASSED HOUSE</b></p>
<p><a href="#">S 236</a></p>	<p>Sen. Alison Clarkson; Sen. Richard Westman</p>	<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 &amp; referred to Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs (01/09/26)</p>

<p><a href="#">S 279</a></p>	<p>Sen. Kesha Ram Hinsdale; Sen. David Weeks; Sen. Patrick Brennan; Sen. Richard Westman</p>	<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 &amp; referred to Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs (01/21/26)</p>
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