

The following is a press release regarding HB 429 for your information.

Illinois lawmakers OK bill covering wine purchases

By [Erik Potter](#)

POST-DISPATCH SPRINGFIELD BUREAU

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SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — The Illinois Legislature approved a bill Tuesday that would change how state wineries can peddle their wares, promising to increase consumers' wine selection.

The measure looks to expand the number of wineries from which Illinois consumers can buy directly and improve the variety of specialty wines consumers can find in stores and restaurants.

It would change current restrictions, which limit out-of-state wineries from selling more than two cases of wine per year to any Illinois consumer.

The new bill would establish a uniform 12-case limit on all wineries and do away with a rule that requires Illinois to have a special agreement with states in order for the cases to be sold.

The new law, if approved by the governor, would also allow small wineries to directly supply restaurants and liquor stores with wine without making them go through a middleman, helping expose their product to more people.

Out-of-state wineries are currently prohibited from directly distributing to retailers, whereas in-state wineries are allowed to distribute a certain amount, based on their size.

The ability to self-distribute has allowed for strong growth in Illinois' wine industry and was a key provision the industry looked to protect in the new legislation.

The measure's prohibition against self-distribution by larger winemakers, however, earned the bill criticism from the handful of in-state wineries that fall into that category.

The changes in the law are designed to bring Illinois into compliance with a 2005 U.S. Supreme Court decision that requires states to treat in-state and out-of-state wineries the same.

The bill, HB429, now goes to Gov. Rod Blagojevich for his signature.

Timothy McNinch
Signature Global Sourcing
P. O. Box 855
Sterling, IL 61081
815.535.3594

"In water one sees one's own face, but in wine one beholds the heart of another." - French Proverb