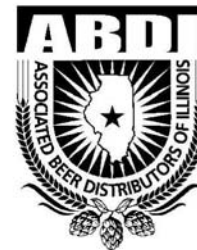


Associated Beer Distributors of Illinois

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**Local Businesses Acknowledged As
Governor Proclaims July 10th Beer Distributor Day**

State's beer industry delivers significant impact to local economy; employs thousands

CHICAGO-(July 10, 2008) – Beer distributors across the State of Illinois today were awarded with a substantial honor as Gov. Rod Blagojevich proclaimed July 10, 2008, “Beer Distributor Day,” commemorating the efforts of beer distributors small and large who have worked in cooperation with the state to regulate the sale and distribution of alcohol for more than 75 years.

“This proclamation by the governor honors and recognizes all of the hard work that beer distributors have delivered for over 75 years to keep the marketplace fair and competitive for business, good for the economy and safe for the consumer,” said Bill Olson, president of the Associated Beer Distributors of Illinois. “We commend the Governor for his unwavering commitment to Illinois businesses and maintaining a safe marketplace for consumers.”

Since 1934, when the Illinois Liquor Control Act was enacted, Illinois has operated under the three- tier regulatory system, which calls on manufacturers, distributors and retailers to each play a respective role to control the importation and sale of alcoholic beverages in the state. Licensed beer distributors serve as the primary point of regulation for alcohol. As a result, products are delivered fresh, only licensed retailers are permitted to sell alcohol, minors are protected from illegal solicitations and consumers are provided with an abundance of select beverages to choose from.

“We believe that maintaining the security of the regulatory system, which has a proven track record of ensuring that only safe and authentic products get to market, is in the best interest of consumers, retailers, restaurants and distributors,” said Donna Spagnola of Central Beverage in Chicago.

Illinois’ beer distribution industry is a dynamic part of the state’s economy, employing 3,505 hard-working men and women and paying them over \$242 million in wages. Beer distributors don’t just offer solid wages; they also offer generous company-provided benefits including health care. The beer distribution industry generates approximately \$644 million in total economic impact for the state of Illinois. For more information on the economic impact, please visit www.beerservesamerica.org.

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Most of the state's beer distributors are small family-owned operations that have served their local communities from generation to generation, often involved in and/or sponsoring community events and activities while regularly contributing to community charities.

"My family has been in the beer distribution business for more than fifty years," says Jim Rinella of Rinella Company Incorporated in Quincy. "It's a great feeling to be recognized by the state for our contributions. People don't realize how hard we work to make sure that our products are not only enjoyed and available, but are consumed responsibly."

For years, ABDI has worked with the Illinois Principles Association (IPA) to spearhead a campaign called "Straight Talk About Underage Drinking" that encourages open, honest communication between parents and children regarding underage drinking. The program has distributed more than 125,000 Straight Talk booklets to over 220 schools throughout Illinois and has been credited by parents, school and law officials as a successful preventative measure.

"Underage drinking is a serious issue and we continue to educate communities and implement preventative measures to keep kids safe," added Olson.

Nationally, the beer industry contributes nearly \$190 billion annually to the U.S. economy and provides more than 1.7 million jobs. In 2006, America's beer industry grew by 2.2 percent, producing and distributing over 210 million barrels of beer.

The Associated Beer Distributors of Illinois is a not for profit business trade association which represents mostly family owned distributors who provide customized inventory management for all retailers to ensure products are delivered fresh and efficiently to restaurants, stores and bars. ABDI operates under a regulated system, licensed by the State of Illinois, to ensure that beer is sold only to licensed retailers who in turn are responsible for selling alcohol to adults of legal drinking age. For more information, visit www.abdi.org.

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