

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Thousands of MI Retailers Cited for Selling Alcohol to
Minors Over Years -- *Not One MI Winery Cited for
Shipping Wine to Minor in 30 Years***

In response to an announcement this morning by Sheriff Gene Wriggelsworth and State Rep. Rick Jones that they allowed a minor to illegally purchase liquor over the Internet from several out-of-state liquor companies, Wine Michigan, which represents Michigan's 42 wineries and 100 vineyard growers, issued the following statement:

"In over 30 years, not one Michigan winery has been cited for selling wine to a minor while hundreds of retail establishments in every corner of the state are cited every day for selling liquor to minors," said John Truscott, spokesperson for Wine Michigan. "If the goal of this legislation is truly to keep alcohol out of the hands of minors, state lawmakers should be instead calling on law enforcement to put their time and resources into training and educating Michigan retailers, not going after Michigan wineries."

"Michigan's wine industry contributes over \$75 million in economic activity to the state. At a time when our economy is lagging behind the rest of the nation, state lawmakers should be passing legislation to help this growing agricultural and tourism industry – not introducing bills to wipe it out," Truscott said.

Executive Vice President Chas Catherman of St. Julian Winery said every precaution is taken to ensure their wine is shipped only to adults of legal drinking age, including age verification by a national identification company.

(more)

“Our business’s livelihood is dependent on our ability to ship directly to customers across the state,” Catherman said. “If Michigan wineries are stripped of our right to ship directly, we’ll see a hugely negative impact and many Michigan wineries will be forced to close while their employees are forced to look elsewhere for jobs.”

The minor who conducted the so-called “sting” is an intern at the public relations firm representing the Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers who support the legislation.

FACTS About Michigan Wineries:

- In over 30 years, not one Michigan winery has been cited for selling wine to a minor.
- In contrast, thousands of Michigan retailers over the years have been cited for selling alcohol and liquor to minors.
- Thirty-nine states allow their in-state wineries to ship directly to their residents, while 27 states allow out of state wineries to ship directly to consumers – Ohio joined most recently in July.
- Today, there are 42 wineries in Michigan and over 100 vineyard growers – producing more than 1,000 jobs in rural areas. This growing agricultural industry contributes over \$75 million in economic activity to the state.
- For every \$1 dollar spent at Michigan wineries, \$5 is generated in lodging, dining, and shopping in our surrounding cities.
- Distributors and retailers can't logistically stock and sell the 10,000 new wines produced each year by America's 2,700 wineries – nor can they stock all of Michigan’s wines.

Editor’s Note: Contrary to prior information from St. Julian Winery, the national verification company, IDresponse correctly identified that wine should not have been shipped to the purchaser.
