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MEDIA CONTACT

Michael Bilello

Executive Vice President, Strategic Communications & Marketing

michael@wswa.org | (202) 716-4805

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Congressional 21st Amendment Caucus Hosts Panel Discussion and Reception with Beverage Alcohol Industry Leaders

WASHINGTON, D.C., 09/18/2024 – This evening, the Congressional 21st Amendment Caucus, Co-Chaired by Representatives Stephanie Bice (R-OK-05) and Susie Lee (D-NV-03), hosted a panel of wine and spirits industry CEOs to discuss the beverage alcohol marketplace and topics critical to the industry. Opened by statements from Representative Lee, the panel discussion lasted 45 minutes before a hosted reception for Capital hill staffers began.

“In Las Vegas we’re no strangers to the economic power of the beverage alcohol industry and the thousands of small businesses and jobs it has fueled across our community,” said Representative Lee. “The 21st Amendment Caucus is all about being responsive to the issues impacting this industry and ensuring that we have common-sense policies to support businesses and protect consumers.”

“When I rewrote Oklahoma’s liquor laws, the outcome was a thriving industry which is continuing to bring economic growth to the state. I am grateful to lead this Caucus, which is seeking ways to promote the beer, wine, and spirits industry in Congress. It is important that all Members understand the impacts that producers, wholesalers, and retailers have in our communities,” said Representative Bice.

Panelists included Executive Director, American Beverage Licensees John Bodnovich, President & CEO, Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America Francis Creighton, President & CEO, American Distilled Spirits Alliance Amanda Nguyen, and President & CEO, National Beer Wholesalers Association Craig Purser. The discussion covered a range of topics including how the 21st Amendment created a pro-consumer beverage alcohol marketplace, the role of the three-tier system in promoting competition, product diversity and consumer safety, as well as the potential expiration of critical tax provisions in 2025 and their impact on the industry.

“Main Street bars, taverns and package liquor stores compete everyday and, in doing so, ensure that American consumers have the best beer, wine and spirits marketplace in the world. These small businesses remain committed to working within well-established state-based alcohol regulatory systems, balanced with a Constitutionally appropriate level of federal policy engagement on beverage alcohol issues,” said Bodnovich.

"Tax policy should help family-owned businesses grow, create jobs and contribute to the economy. Helping businesses organized as pass-throughs –like family-owned wine and spirits wholesalers– compete with the largest corporations has benefits for our entire supply chain, consumers and the economy. That's why WSWA continues to advocate for tax policies that allow these businesses to thrive, primarily by making the 199A deduction permanent," said Creighton.

"Our ongoing discussions with the Congressional 21st Amendment Caucus underscore the importance of collaboration between industry leaders and policymakers to ensure a thriving and innovative beverage alcohol marketplace. Tonight's panel helps us promote policies that foster growth and protect the diverse interests of consumers and businesses alike," said Nguyen.

"The 21st amendment gave states the authority to regulate alcohol, helping create today's safe and competitive alcohol marketplace. The industry brings enjoyment to adult consumers across the nation and provides billions of dollars of economic contribution while ensuring excise and sales tax revenue is collected. The distribution system provides a chain of custody that protects consumers and promotes competition. As Congress considers a variety of expiring tax provisions, we urge them to provide tax competitiveness and certainty for Main Street businesses like beer distributors to continue to stimulate the economy, create jobs and serve the public," said Purser.

About the Congressional 21st Amendment Caucus

The Congressional 21st Amendment Caucus is a bipartisan caucus that emphasizes the significance of state-based alcohol regulation for consumers and the marketplace. It educates members of Congress and staff on the role licensed alcohol businesses play in tax collection, public health priorities, and maintaining a competitive market. The caucus remains committed to protecting the regulatory system that has benefited American consumers for decades.