

New Hampshire Governor MAGGIE HASSAN

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Governor Hassan's Veto Message Regarding HB 122

CONCORD – Governor Maggie Hassan released the following message after vetoing HB 122 today:

"By the authority vested in me, pursuant to part II, Article 44 of the New Hampshire Constitution, on June 2, 2015, I have vetoed House Bill 122, relative to advertising of liquor or beverages.

"Substance misuse, including alcohol misuse, continues to be one of the major public health and safety challenges facing us as a state. Moreover, statistics suggest that New Hampshire has among the highest rates of underage drinking in the country. In changing the way that we regulate, and in some cases loosening restrictions on referring to minors in the advertisement and sale of alcoholic beverages, House Bill 122 could undermine our efforts to prevent underage drinking.

"It is imperative that we strike the appropriate balance between responsible regulation of alcohol and the desired latitude for marketing creativity within our growing craft beer industry. However, in repealing RSA 179:31, VII(a), particularly the explicit prohibition on references to minors, House Bill 122 fails to provide adequate statutory guidance to the Liquor Commission in maintaining that important balance.

"While I remain very supportive of our growing craft beer industry in the state and have signed many laws aimed at supporting the expansion of this industry in a responsible way, statutory changes significantly impacting the way alcohol could be advertised in our state must be undertaken with great caution and clear guidelines. House Bill 122 does not meet that standard, and it could also potentially lead to greater inconsistencies in how our marketing regulations are applied.

"I would encourage proponents to work with the Liquor Commission and substance misuse advocacy organizations to develop a proposal with clear guidance that is understandable to both the business community and the Liquor Commission. Such a proposal should aim to balance the desire for creativity in the marketing and/or branding of craft and other locally manufactured alcoholic beverages with the very real need to ensure that such marketing does not encourage underage drinking.

"Because this bill does not strike that necessary balance, I have vetoed House Bill 122."