



# S.7909 (Skoufis)/A.8547 (Cunningham)

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<p><b>BILL</b></p> <p>S.7909 (Skoufis)/A.8547 (Cunningham)</p>
<p><b>SUBJECT</b></p> <p>Allowing Wine &amp; Spirit Retail Licensees to Own a Second Store</p>
<p><b>DATE</b></p> <p>April 28, 2026</p>
<p><b>SUPPORT</b></p>

The Business Council of New York State, representing over 3,000 businesses throughout New York, strongly supports S.7909(Skoufis)/A.8547(Cunningham) that would make a simple update to the current New York State Alcoholic Beverage Control Law (ABC Law).

This memorandum is submitted in support of amending New York’s Alcoholic Beverage Control Law which prohibits any person from owning or having an interest in more than one retail liquor store in the state. This legislation would allow owners to be licensed for 2 stores. The current statutory limitation is outdated, anti-competitive, and harmful to both consumers and the growth of responsible small- and medium-sized businesses. New York is one of the only states in the country that maintains a strict one-store-per-person rule, a restriction that does not exist for any other type of business in the State. This modest update to the law would promote economic development, reduce prices, improve consumer access, and bring New York in line with the majority of other states.

This single license law was a post-Prohibition era law intended to maintain close control over the distribution of alcohol and prevent any criminal interests from controlling an unfair number of licenses to gain illicit control over the alcohol distribution in the State. However, the retail landscape has dramatically evolved. The modern economy depends on scale, brand development, and fair competition—elements stifled by the current statutory framework.

Many responsible small business owners would like the opportunity to grow their business, but the one-store limitation hinders that growth. By permitting ownership of 2 locations, the state can reward good actors and allow family-owned businesses to thrive across regions. Last year, the Business Council conducted a survey of over 30 independent liquor stores around the State with more than half of those owners responding that they would like to pursue another

store if the law would allow them. Removing this restriction would modernize New York's alcohol laws and remove artificial barriers to competition and allow businesses to grow while creating generational wealth for independent owners.

Allowing 2 licenses does not mean an automatic expansion of retail alcohol outlets. The State Liquor Authority (SLA) retains full power to license, inspect, and discipline all retail operations. Licensing standards will not be impacted by this change as current safeguards such as background checks, residency requirements, will still be applied to the second license, to ensure responsible conduct and licensure.

Allowing licensees to expand to a second store means more jobs, storefronts, and tax revenue. At a time when small business development and job creation are key policy priorities, this change would provide a meaningful economic boost.

Furthermore, as part of the 2022-2023 New York State Budget, language was passed into law creating the ABC Law Revision Commission. The Commission consisted of 21 members from each sector of New York's alcohol and beverage industry as well as representatives from state agencies. The Business Council was a member of the Commission and as part of the work conducted, allowing a person to own more than one liquor stores was one of the numerous issues discussed and widely supported by the commission members. Thus, the proposal was approved by a vote of the members and included in the Commission's final report delivered to the Legislature and Governor in May, 2023.

Since this issue is roundly supported by many sectors of the industry, and we believe that it provides additional help to business owners as well as benefits consumers, The Business Council of New York State strongly supports this bill.