



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

State sales tax exemption extended for craft beer, cider, liquor tastings extended under new law co-sponsored by O'Mara

THOMAS F. O'MARA December 1, 2017

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Elmira, N.Y., December 1—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) today said that legislation he co-sponsored to provide licensed breweries, cider producers, and distilleries with a state sales tax exemption for tastings they charge for, has been signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

“The tax relief, regulatory reform, and promotional actions we have taken over the past several years have helped spark the rapid growth of craft breweries, cideries, and distilleries throughout the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions. This new sales tax exemption for tastings will help continue this growth and strengthen these industries,” said O’Mara, a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Under previous law, any wine, beer, cider, or liquor tasting provided free of charge was exempt from state sales and use taxes.

The new law (**S.3387/A.6945, Chapter 418 of the Laws of 2017**) extends the state sales tax exemption to tastings that breweries, cideries, and distilleries charge for -- an exemption previously provided only to wineries.

The recent modernization of the state’s Alcoholic Beverage Control Law (ABC) and numerous tax relief and regulatory reform actions over the past several years have proven enormously beneficial to both the wine and craft beverage industries, including beer, cider, and spirits. The approval of the Craft New York Act in 2014, for example, eliminated burdensome, bureaucratic red tape on producers and eased restrictions on the marketing of craft products.

As a result of all of these actions, the craft beverage industry has become a significant engine of job creation and economic development statewide, including across the Finger Lakes and Southern Tier regions. New York State is now home to over 900 wineries, breweries, distilleries, and cideries. Since 2011, the number of farm wineries has increased by more than 60 percent, from 195 in 2010 to over 300 today. The farm cidery license created in 2014 has resulted in over 20 new farm cideries statewide.

The craft beer industry now accounts for more than 6,500 jobs in New York and has a \$3.5 billion economic impact. Production has surged. The Finger Lakes and Southern Tier

regions are now home to more than half of New York's breweries, brewpubs, and related outlets. The **Finger Lakes Beer Trail** was comprised of 24 breweries in 2011. It now includes more than 100 breweries and brewpubs, beer stores, tap houses, and tasting rooms.