



2025 Northern / Southern Regional Conference



Hyatt Regency Buffalo Hotel & Conference Center

Two Fountain Plaza, Buffalo, New York 14202

September 14-16, 2025

*Over a Barrel: Riding the Rapids of Alcohol Regulation, Honoring the
Empire State's Spirit and History of Innovation*

BUSINESS AGENDA

1st DAY – SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

2:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.	MAID OF THE MIST TOUR, NIAGARA FALLS – <i>Optional – meet in hotel lobby</i>
6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.	REGISTRATION & INFORMATION DESK – <i>Hotel Lobby / Atrium</i>
6:30 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.	WELCOME RECEPTION – <i>Genesse Public House Bar – hotel atrium/lobby</i>
8:00 P.M. – 12:00 A.M.	HOSPITALITY SUITE – <i>VIP Presidential Suite (16th floor)</i>

2nd DAY – MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2025

7:30 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.	REGISTRATION & INFORMATION DESK – <i>Coatroom (Mezzanine floor)</i>
8:00 A.M. – 8:55 A.M.	BREAKFAST – <i>Grand Ballroom A (Mezzanine floor)</i>
9:00 A.M. – 9:15 A.M.	CONFERENCE BEGINS – <i>Grand Ballroom DEFG (Mezzanine floor)</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPENING CEREMONIES • PRESENTATION OF COLORS • WELCOME <i>By New York State Liquor Authority</i>
9:15 A.M. – 10:15 A.M.	ROLL CALL: Jenna Ayala, NCSLA Executive Director
10:15 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.	MORNING BREAK – <i>Grand Ballroom Prefunction (Mezzanine floor)</i>
10:30 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.	<p>PANEL #1: Navigating Tariffs: Adapting to Rising Costs in the Alcohol Industry</p> <p>Recent and fluctuating tariffs on America’s trading partners, particularly those imposed on the EU and UK, could create significant financial pressures for the alcohol industry, forcing businesses to adapt in various ways. Small alcohol producers are facing rising costs for aluminum cans and essential ingredients, while restaurants and bars are seeing increased prices for alcohol and other supplies that are imported. As businesses navigate these challenges, critical questions arise: How will they adapt to these rising costs? How will consumer behavior shift in response? And what long-term impacts will these responses have on the industry?</p>

Moderator: SARAH BRADLEY, *General Counsel*, Campari America, LLC

Panelists: JULIE COOK, *Senior Counsel, Compliance*, Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.
DARSHAK DHOLAKIA, *Partner*, McDermott Will & Schulte LLP



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ROB MARON, *Senior Vice President, International Trade Policy and Market Access, Distilled Spirits Counsel of the United States*

WILLIAM TOMASZEWSKI, *Senior Regulatory Advisor, Wine.com*

11:40 A.M. – 12:40 P.M.

PANEL #2: New York and Its Neighbors: An Historical Perspective on Alcohol Trafficking from Prohibition to Today

Due to its proximity to Canada, Buffalo's storied waterfront emerged as an alcohol smuggling hub during Prohibition, resulting in a thriving underground, cross-border bootlegging infrastructure likely closely tracking Atlantic City and other neighboring jurisdictions. The response that followed was an end to Prohibition marked by the strictures of alcohol regulatory regimes emerging through complex statutory controls as seen in New York's Alcoholic Beverage Control Law. Panelists will explore that evolution, from prohibition through to today. In addition, assorted efforts aimed at modernizing liquor laws to meet current and evolving business models, creating a more symbiotic relationship between licensees and alcohol regulators will be addressed.

Moderator:

MARTIN P. MEHLER, *Senior Partner, Mehler & Buscemi*

Panelists:

KIRSTIN L. KRUEGER, *Interim Director, New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control*
JEREMY LOCKE, *Deputy Chief Operating Officer, The Alcohol & Gaming Commission of Ontario*

MARC SORINI, *General Counsel, Brewers Association*

12:45 P.M. – 1:45 P.M.

LUNCH – Grand Ballroom A (Mezzanine Floor)

2:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

PANEL #3: Pouring with a Purpose: Compliance in Alcohol-Focused Donations and Sponsorships

As beer, wine and spirits brands grow in size and popularity, their desire to give back to the community supporting them grows too. State and federal regulations significantly impact the possibility, manner and practicality of alcohol focused companies from engaging in such activity. This panel will discuss the rules, pitfalls and potential legislative alternatives.

Moderator:

ROB PINSON, *Partner & Alcohol & Trade Hospitality Team Leader, Adams & Reece*

Panelists:

RANDY BARNHART, *VP Governmental Relations Eastern Region & Canada, Southern Glazer's Wine and Spirits*

RYAN MALKIN, *Principal Attorney, Malkin Law P.A.*

MISSY P. WELCH, *ESQ., Director of Programming, North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission*



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3:00 P.M. – 3:15 P.M.

AFTERNOON BREAK – *Grand Ballroom Prefunction (Mezzanine Floor)*

3:15 P.M. – 4:15 P.M.

PANEL #4: Beyond the Bottle Bill – Assessing Public Policy Options to Reduce Environmental Impact of the Alcoholic Beverage Industry

Several states are considering policies to mitigate the environmental impact of consumer waste and plastics pollution by moving beyond traditional “product stewardship” approaches to waste management and sustainability such as the New York “Bottle Bill” and the deposit/returns system established thereby. While New York considers how - or whether - to expand applicability of the “Bottle Bill” to wine and liquor bottles, states such as Hawaii and California are increasingly seeking to transfer some portion of the costs of managing the waste generated by the sale of consumer goods including alcoholic beverage containers to the entities that actually produce those goods via “Extended Producer Responsibility” or “EPR” policies. While many states - including New York - currently have “EPR” type statutes in place for consumer goods such as electronics and rechargeable batteries, states including Hawaii (via Hawaii bill H.B. 1264), are considering whether or not to extend their “EPR” policies to consumer waste including beverage containers – thereby seeking to relieve their taxpayers of some of the costs associated with the environmental cleanup arising from consumer waste consisting at least in part of discarded alcoholic beverage containers. The panel will examine various public policy approaches to sustainability and waste management that states can adopt to address the growing health, safety, environmental, and social impacts of consumer product waste and plastic pollution, including potential implications for the alcoholic beverage industry.

Moderator:

STEVE GROSS, *Vice President, State Relations*, Wine Institute

Panelists:

PAUL GAGLIARDI, *Owner*, Flair Beverages Corp

PAUL PISANO, *Senior Vice President, Industry Affairs and General Counsel*, National Beer Wholesalers Association

SCOTT WEXLER, *Managing Director*, Catalyst Government Relations

6:30 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.

PRESIDENT’S BANQUET DINNER & TASTING BY TASTENY – *Grand Ballroom ABC*

9:00 P.M. – 12:00 A.M.

HOSPITALITY SUITE - *VIP Presidential Suite (16th Floor)*

3rd Day – TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2025

8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

REGISTRATION & INFORMATION DEK – *Coatroom*

8:00 A.M. – 8:55 A.M.

BREAKFAST – *Grand Ballroom A*

9:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M.

PANEL #5: Keeping it Local: Small Businesses Work to Remain Compliant and Thriving



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Small businesses in the alcoholic beverage arena are birthed by brave and innovative visionaries with a dream and a plan. The hard work of achieving success, particularly in this highly regulated, three-tiered system, is not for the faint of heart. This panel explores some of the challenges faced and success stories, as well as changes sought. The experiences of various NYS alcoholic beverage related businesses will be shared, including the impact felt surrounding legal challenges to self-distribution and new legislative initiatives that may offer some relief.

Moderator: JAIME GALLAGHER, Deputy Counsel, New York State Liquor Authority

Panelists: MICHAEL CORRERA, Executive Director, Metropolitan Package Store Association, Inc.
SANDRA JACQUEZ, *President*, New York State Latino Restaurant, Bar and Lounge Association
BRIAN FACQUET, Chairman, New York State Distillers Guild
TIM PEZZOLESI, Director of Agriculture Development, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
DAVE SIMONI, General Counsel, Corporate Affairs, FIFCO USA

10:10 A.M. – 11:10 A.M.

PANEL #6: Custom Crush vs. Alternating Proprietorship: Who's In Charge Here?

This panel will explore the differences between an alternating proprietorship and custom crush (contract manufacturing). It is possible to have different entities share the same premises and to manufacture for another party. Each arrangement is governed by its own rules, creates different obligations and leads to different consequences. It all begins with the threshold question, "Who is making the product?" The panel will discuss TTB and state considerations and rules governing alternating proprietorships and custom crush arrangements, proper COLA applicants, the transfer and storage of product, tax implications, and record keeping responsibilities.

Moderator: CURTIS R. HARRINGTON II, *Founding Partner*, Belcher Sykes Harrington, PLLC

Panelists: JENNIFER HILL, *Outreach Program Manager*, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB)
CHRIS MESSINA, *Senior Partner*, Barnes Beverage Group
MAGGIE WOODS, *Distilled Spirits Administrator*, Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control

11:15 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

MORNING BREAK – Grand Ballroom Prefunction

11:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

PANEL #7: Alcohol Jeopardy



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Co-Hosts:

PHILLIP SANCHEZ, *Director*, New Mexico Regulation and Licensing Department Alcoholic Beverage Control Division
SCOTT RAMSEY, *Executive Director*, New York Cider Association

12:30 P.M. – 1:30 P.M.

LUNCH – Grand Ballroom A

1:45 P.M. – 2:45 P.M.

PANEL #8: Bridging Policy and Practice: Educating vs. Lobbying vs. Lawyering

State alcohol regulators and their staff often serve as essential educators to both executive and legislative branch officials, ensuring policy decisions are informed by real-world regulatory experience, legal mandates, and public interest considerations. Lobbyists and alcohol industry lawyers also serve in the vital role of advocating for the needs and goals of their clients.

How do regulators effectively communicate the complexities of alcohol laws, their impact on industry and the resulting enforcement requirements to policymakers who may not be familiar with the intricacies of the regulatory system, industry trends, or longstanding statutory provisions?

This panel will explore the unique and distinguishable roles the various stakeholders play in educating, shaping and/or informing policy— whether through testifying before legislative committees, providing data-driven analysis on regulatory trends, assessing the feasibility and impact of proposed laws, or offering technical assistance in drafting legislation. Panelists will also discuss how engaged policymakers remain informed about evolving industry practices, court rulings, and federal developments that may require adjustments to state laws and regulations.

The panel will address the challenge of administering decades-old laws whose intended purpose may no longer be clear or runs counter to industry trends while implementing longstanding regulations in a manner that balances industry trends with valid and long standing policy objectives around public safety.

This session will provide valuable insights on the intersection of law, policy, and politics from the regulator perspective.

Moderator:

TRAVIS HILL, *Counsel*, Hunton Andrews Kurth, LLP

Panelists:

THOMAS AKRAS, *Director of Legal and Legislative Division*, Maryland ATCC
RODRIGO DIAZ, *Executive Director*, Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board
WENDY KNIGHT, *Commissioner*, Vermont Department of Liquor and Lottery

2:45 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.

AFTERNOON BREAK – Grand Ballroom Prefunction



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PANEL #9: The Logistics of DTC: Fulfillment Houses & Shipping Legally

Fulfillment houses are third-party logistics providers that store, package, and ship alcoholic beverages on behalf of manufacturers and retailers. Their role has expanded with the rise of direct-to-consumer (DTC) shipping, helping producers reach customers across state lines. However, alcohol regulation varies widely by state due to the 21st Amendment, leading to different rules for fulfillment houses. Some states require licenses and impose reporting requirements, while others prohibit their use entirely. Major manufacturing states like New York and California lack specific laws addressing them, relying instead on general warehousing and transportation statutes. This patchwork of regulations raises questions about enforcement and compliance, particularly as fulfillment houses do not fit neatly into the traditional three-tier system. Some regulators worry they may facilitate DTC shipping in ways that circumvent state laws. Unlike traditional warehouses, fulfillment houses focus on rapid order processing rather than long-term storage, making tracking shipments and ensuring tax compliance more complex.

As DTC sales grow, policymakers must determine how fulfillment houses fit within the regulatory framework. This panel will explore the proliferation of these logistics hubs as well as the challenges of balancing enforcement with market realities, ensuring consumer access while maintaining oversight to prevent unauthorized sales, and protecting state control over alcohol distribution.

Moderator: RUSSELL THOMAS, *Executive Director*, Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission

Panelists: ALEX KORAL, *Regulatory General Counsel*, ShipCompliant by Sovos
ELAINA PARINA, *Vice President, Regulatory Affairs*, Constellation
DUSTIN PICKENS, *Lead Counsel, Regulatory Affairs*, FedEx
ALLYSSA WICKSTROM, *Chief Legal Officer*, Wineshipping.com

4:00 P.M.

CONFERENCE CONCLUDES

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO EXPLORE BUFFALO (Dinner On Your Own)

8:00 P.M. – 12:00 A.M.

HOSPITALITY SUITE - VIP Presidential Suite (16th Floor)

Safe travels home!

UPCOMING CONFERENCES:

2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE: JUNE 14-17, 2026, NEW ORLEANS, LA



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2026 N/S REGIONAL CONFERENCE: LITTLE ROCK, AR