

MONMOUTH POLL SHOWS STRONG SUPPORT FOR WINE AND SPIRIT SALES IN NJ SUPERMARKETS

Three out of Four Alcoholic Beverage Consumers Support Sales in Local Supermarkets

TRENTON - New Jersey Retailers for Responsible Liquor Licensing (NJRRLL) released the results of a statewide survey conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute (MUPI) which showed strong support for changing New Jersey law to permit the wine and spirit sales in New Jersey supermarkets. In fact, more than three out of every four poll respondents who consume alcohol indicated that they would like to see the local sales.

Retailers for Responsible Liquor Licensing commissioned The Monmouth University Polling Institute to conduct a survey of New Jersey residents in April 2010 to assess public opinion on allowing alcohol sales in supermarkets. The most startling finding was that among regular purchasers, 76% would like to see supermarkets sell alcohol.

Legislation (A-1325) has been introduced by Assemblyman Louis Greenwald (D-6) to gradually raise to 10 a current two-license limit imposed on grocery stores by state law. Greenwald called the limit a "holdover from a bygone era" and said his legislation would help create jobs and spur economic growth.

The telephone survey was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute on April 7-11, 2010 with a statewide random sample of 787 residents age 21 and older. For results based on this sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

The complete poll results can be found at www.onestopshopnj.com

A summary of the poll's major findings are as follows:

The majority of New Jerseyans (56%) favor allowing supermarkets to sell alcoholic beverages, compared to 38% of Garden State residents who oppose it. Among those who purchase alcohol on a regular basis, 76% are in favor. Support stands at 51% among occasional shoppers and drops to 29% among those who never purchase alcohol.

Among those in favor of allowing the sale of alcohol in supermarkets, convenience is the most important argument (50%). Among those against allowing such sales, the top concern is minors having easier access to alcohol (33%).

More than 4-in-10 (44%) New Jerseyans who buy alcohol would continue purchasing alcohol at a liquor store as often as they do now if supermarkets sold alcohol. A similar number (47%) say they would go less often.

Younger people are more likely to favor alcohol sales in supermarkets, with 65% of those between the ages of 21 and 34 favoring it, compared to 57% of 35 to 54 year olds and only 49% of those 55 and older. The poll suggests that younger people might simply see alcohol

restrictions as outdated. The proportion of young people saying that there is “just no reason not to” is about twice as high as for other age groups.

In other poll findings, only 1-in-3 suburbanites oppose the change, but just over half of the urban population are against supermarkets selling alcohol, with most of them (42%) being strongly opposed. When asked for reasons for their strong opposition, many urban residents state that they are opposed to drinking in general and they fear an increase in underage drinking.

The poll also asked participants why they either favor or oppose this change in alcohol licensing. Those in favor of allowing supermarket alcohol sales mention convenience (50%) as the most important argument. This is followed by the notion that “other states do it” (15%) and the feeling that there is just no good reason for limiting the sale of alcohol to liquor stores (14%). Other reasons include free market economy arguments (9%) and the expectation that liquor would become less expensive (6%).

More than 4 out of 10 (44%) New Jerseyans who purchase alcohol state that expanding sales to supermarkets would not change their alcohol purchasing behavior at all. A similar number (47%) state they would go to the liquor store less often. About 1-in-4 each would go a little less often (24%) or a lot less often (23%). Among regular shoppers 38% will purchase from local liquor stores as often as before while occasional shoppers are less likely to change their behavior (49%).

In conclusion, the majority of Garden State residents would like alcohol to be available in supermarkets.