

PENNSYLVANIA LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD
SENATE HEARING: JUNE 4, 2013

I want to thank the Senators for requesting that the members of the Board of the PLCB testify as you proceed with these hearings on the privatization issue.

Both Bob and I and all of the employees at the PLCB are here to assist the legislature and the Governor in any way that we can, to answer questions and provide information and input from our experience of working and operating the PLCB. I know there are many ideas, a lot of input from many interest parties - the industry, licensees, beer lobby, and others as to what privatization means and, for that matter, how it should occur. Simply stated, in my opinion there is only one issue: we should do the right thing for the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is not all about profit, it is not all about control but it is about the PLCB entering the 21st Century for the good of our citizens. We all know the history of when the system and the Liquor Code were formed in 1933; it was to prevent the sale of alcohol. Someone stated the other day that it was created to protect us from ourselves. That basically was it. Those involved did not want the citizens to purchase alcohol so the system was put in place to make it as difficult as possible. Now, it is a thriving wholesale and retail operation on one side and a resource for education, licensing and enforcement on the other. But the issue is what is the PLCB today? One side of the PLCB is told to create more profits and generate more income for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The other side of the PLCB is licensing and enforcement giving substantial funds to the state police, substantial funds for alcohol education and substantial funds to prevent the abuse of alcohol and that alcohol is not served to minors.

As we move forward, there is no reason why at this day and age a citizen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania must go to three different locations in order to prepare for a

party or an outdoor Sunday afternoon barbeque. Similarly, there is no reason why someone cannot go pick-up dinner at an establishment and be able to buy a bottle of wine or spirits at the same place without driving a mile or two down the road. That said, we still have to make sure that minors are protected, our alcohol education and alcohol prevention programs continue, and there is no improper advantage to anyone in the business or any given segment of the alcohol industry.

Obviously, we are here to help as I stated earlier. The PLCB will implement and work with the Governor and the legislature in implementing what is finally passed by the Senate and the House and signed by Governor Corbett. We took an oath to serve the Commonwealth and the citizens of the Commonwealth and we intend to do that. We also want to be a source and a resource to the legislature and the Governor as you proceed to make decisions about privatization. Remember, we can be very helpful. There are many good employees at the PLCB, whether it be wholesale, retail, licensing or education who are dedicated and knowledgeable. You have the knowledge in our building. They are good and able people who would be more than happy to assist you and answer questions as this very important issue moves forward in the legislature.