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August 8, 2003

Attn: TTB Notice No. 4  
Chief, Regulations and Procedures Division  
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau  
P.O. Box 50221  
Washington, DC 20091-0221

To Whom It May Concern:

As an employee of the beer industry, I support the proposed rule issued in March 2003 by the Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) outlining that in order for flavored malt beverages (FMB) to be classified as beer, their alcohol content cannot exceed 0.5%.

Beer is a unique product that has been regulated and taxed differently than other alcohol beverages throughout history. The TTB proposed rule is consistent with the historical interpretation of what constitutes beer and other malt beverages. Adoption of the TTB "0.5% by volume standard" would ensure the integrity of beer and the brewing process.

Equating beer and beverages that derive a majority of their alcohol content from distilled spirits could weaken the important distinctions between beer and products with higher alcohol content. If traditional distinctions disappear, it will only be a matter of time before other producers of alcohol beverages attempt to categorize themselves as beer products. Beer is not distilled spirits, wine or a product that has been made through the distillation process. It is made through the brewing process.

As a beer drinker, I support the proposed 0.5% standard for FMBs to be classified as beer.  
Sincerely,

