



September 1, 2005

Chief, Regulations & Procedure Division
Alcohol & Tobacco Tax & Trade Bureau
PO Box 14412
Washington DC 20044-4412

ATTN: Notice No. 41

Dear Chief:

I am writing this letter as a state legislator and policy maker. In this capacity, I have been a member, as well as co-chair, of the Washington State House of Representatives Commerce & Labor Committee. As a matter of principal, I am not a fan of regulating business. However, I also believe it is important for consumers to be adequately informed when making a decision. It is for this reason I would strongly encourage you to adopt regulations that would allow alcoholic beverage companies to place nutritional information on their labels.

Under current regulations, most beer, wine and distilled spirits labels may not provide consumers with basic meaningful information as to what is in the product. Most food packages, soft drink containers, over-the-counter drugs and even dietary supplements provide basic consumer information on the label. Alcoholic beverages (with some exceptions) are the only major class of consumable goods that do not provide important information on the label, such as serving size, alcohol content per serving, or calories, fat and protein per serving, as well as ingredients or any allergens.

Furthermore, existing label requirements for beer, wine and spirits are so disparate as to promote consumer confusion.

I believe providing this basic data is necessary to aid consumers in making informed choices about what to drink and how much to drink. Caloric and alcohol per serving information is important to anyone who is watching their diet or trying to monitor their alcohol intake, respectively.

I urge the Bureau to act expediently to adopt a regulation that permits the printing of meaningful consumer-oriented Serving Facts on beer, wine and spirits labels. Meanwhile, I urge the Bureau to allow manufactures to voluntarily provide this type of truthful, non-misleading information on labels, while the making process moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James A. Clements", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

James A. Clements
Representative, 14th District