



What is a GROWLER?

February 6, 2012 (Tallahassee, FL)—You may not know what a growler is, but it has been a ***controversial subject in Tallahassee*** for many years. As Secretary of the Department of Business and Professional Regulation, we were often in the middle of **beverage law** controversy—the three tier system, the size of bottles, beer distributor’s gifts, and how many beer signs can hang on the window, etc. Those of you familiar with the beer industry know exactly what I mean. These issues may seem insignificant to some, but they are *critical to the beer industry in Florida*.

So what is a growler and why do we care? **A growler is an old-fashioned way of enjoying draft beer at home.** This was the only way to enjoy beer at home prior to the six pack. *It is the rage of breweries, brewpubs and grocery stores around the country but not in Florida.* Florida only allows breweries to sell the reusable bottles that keep beer from going flat until they are opened. This means that you cannot take home a growler from your favorite brewpub or find it at the local grocery store. **Florida has strict regulations on the size of beer bottles and does not allow the 64 ounce growler, the industry standard.**

The **state craft brewers would like to cash in on the growing popularity of growlers** which consumers can refill and in some cases collect. Fewer bottles in the landfill sounds like an extra benefit.

Why does the legislature resist this? Former Sen. Lee said that, *“Larger beer sizes, especially for high-alcohol beers, could lead to over consumption and impaired drivers.”* Sen. Lee is, by the way, the sponsor of the bill from 2001 that legalized the 32-ounce and gallon-sized bottles for breweries in 2001.

Sen. Lee is also quoted as saying, *“It’s remarkable the explosion of craft beer that’s taken place and where we’d be today without this law.”* That statement begs the question, does less regulation benefit business in Florida?

If your business is interested in this fight, please give me a call and we would be happy to work with you.

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