

Alcohol – Competition



The [basic laws](#) concerning the distribution of alcoholic drinks in Michigan were written in 1933 when prohibition ended. A lot of the laws were formulated to prevent a repeat of what was felt to be deficiencies in alcohol laws prior to prohibition. The result is the [three tier system of alcohol distribution](#) in Michigan and other states. Although the system works it does have its critics. Briefly, some feel that the unnecessary [legally created wholesaler middleman with monopoly power](#) decreases competition, which results in higher prices for beer and wine.

I question much of the rationale for the current system in this day and age, especially the middleman. The middleman, the benefactors of the current system, promote an alcohol philosophy

that makes them appear they are saving mankind from the evils(1) of alcohol by reducing consumption through high prices. They call it a responsible approach to alcohol. There is nothing legally wrong with what they are doing because it is a legal for profit business and sanctioned by the government. They are good and upright business people in a highly regulated business. No scandal or corruption among them in a very profitable monopoly created and protected by the state. In 2014 it was [reported](#) that a Michigan state commission made [72 recommendations to modernize alcohol laws in Michigan](#). Only a few were implemented, with some being watered down. Changes are [opposed by powerful interests](#), mainly the well established middlemen, that benefit from the current system. They are a strong lobby, and buy influence by giving a lot of money to politicians. The contemporary business climate should promote competition, which is good for the consumer. Current alcohol laws do the opposite, which is bad for the consumer. How can the alcohol industry have more competition and players?

Alcohol laws are huge, complex, and have established groups that benefit from the current governing statutes. The ones who benefit are very powerful and do not want change that would be detrimental to them. The Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association, the middleman, makes large political contributions to protect their interests. My Republican opponent Michael Webber has received at least \$8,500 from the Michigan Beer and Wine Wholesalers Association. The Republicans are against unnecessary government regulation and the government standing in the way. What about the contemporary business climate for beer and wine and the role of the middleman? Did Mike Webber sell out to big alcohol at the expense of the consumer? I believe competition is good for the consumer. **I will make**

a toast for alcohol competition. All consumers should drink to it and vote for more competition in the beer and wine business by voting for me.



(1) The “middleman” does not treat the alcoholic. As a physician I am very familiar with the evils of alcohol due to alcoholism, which is a terrible disease. I have seen death, liver cirrhosis, organic brain disease, broken lives, broken marriages, abused individuals, and the consequences of the drunk driver due to drinking. The legal age to drink should be 21. Drunk drivers should be dealt with harshly. I have advocated Antabuse, which deters drinking by causing a metabolic reaction to alcohol, for all drunk drivers. Those knowingly serving under aged drinkers and drunk drivers should be penalized. Those suffering from alcoholism, which is a life long illness, should receive the treatment they need. Alcoholics Anonymous is the best treatment for many. There is no definitive cure. Permanent abstinence is the goal, although elusive for many alcoholics.

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