
Empire State Restaurant & Tavern Association

Report From The Executive Director...Scott Wexler

Summer 2017

Liquor Pricing Bill Stalls as Legislature Leaves Capital - The State Legislature adjourned their regular legislative session on June 23rd completing their work for the year. Amongst the issues not addressed before they adjourned for the year is our liquor pricing bill. We did succeed in getting the bill introduced in both houses of the State Legislature and getting the Senate bill (S4343) approved by the Senate Commerce Committee, but the Assembly bill (A7898) didn't advance from the Assembly Commerce Committee nor did the Senate bill come up for a vote by the full Senate.

This leaves us with work to do before the legislature returns to Albany next January. We'll be developing an advocacy campaign for the Fall so legislators can hear from you directly why a change in the system for selling wine and liquor is necessary. We always knew this would be a difficult battle but it's a fight worth having. We may not have achieved our objective this year but we made good progress – something to build on as we work towards our ultimate success.

Good Time Had at Annual Golf Outing - A late afternoon rain shower didn't dampen the good time for the participants in our Annual Golf Outing at Cronin's Golf Resort in Warrensburg last month. We had more than 70 golfers tee it up this year and they were treated to a great day. Thanks go to our outing sponsors for donating the products and prizes that made the event a success: Southern Glazers Wine & Spirits, Empire Merchants, DeCrescente Beer Distributors and Saratoga Eagle Beer.

Paid Family Leave Payroll Deductions Can Begin July 1st - This is a reminder that although New York employers don't have to provide Paid Family Leave benefits to their employees until January 1, 2018, they may now begin to make deductions from employees' wages to offset the cost of family leave insurance starting with their first payroll on or after July 1, 2017.

Under the law, paid leave benefits are financed by employee payroll deductions. Employers are not required to directly fund the family leave benefit. State regulations permit the employer to deduct .126% of an employees' wages, up to the statewide average weekly wage of \$1,305.92. Employers can use those deductions to purchase family leave insurance or to self-insure. We've enclosed a "Frequently Asked Questions" to help you navigate the new law and your obligations.