

Governor Signs Bill to Grow Delaware Brewing, Farm Winery Industries

Law ensures these small businesses have fair opportunity to compete

Wilmington, DE – Recognizing their contributions to Delaware’s economy, Governor Jack Markell signed legislation today to ensure farm wineries, brew pubs, microbreweries, and craft distilleries have a fair opportunity to grow their small businesses.

Markell and House Speaker Rep. Pete Schwartzkopf, the bill’s primary sponsor, were joined by representatives from the industry as they outlined the benefits of [House Bill 190](#) during a ceremony at Dogfish Head Craft Brewery in Milton. The law addresses restrictions that had prevented these companies from expanding and from offering a greater variety of products, including beverages that would be made with Delaware farm products.

“Delaware companies in this field have served our residents incredibly well, but our laws have put them at a disadvantage,” said Markell. “House Bill 190 gives these hardworking businessmen and women a fair chance to reach their potential. When Delaware’s small businesses can compete on a level playing field, we know they will thrive.”

Among the changes resulting from the new law, brew pubs will be allowed to distill any product, including Delaware farm products like peaches, strawberries, and honey. Previously, they were not permitted to make rums, gins or other products that were not malt-based.

✘ In addition, prior law did not permit entities licensed as

farm wineries, brew pubs, microbreweries, and craft distilleries to have an interest in a licensed alcohol manufacturer located in another state, limiting growth of Delaware companies. HB190 will permit them to associate with a manufacturing firm in another state as long as their combined sales do not exceed the maximum amount allowed to be licensed in Delaware.

“This is a perfect example of what government can do to help business grow and be successful. In this case, we had an opportunity to help our local brewpubs, distilleries and wineries to stay competitive in and out of state,” said House Speaker Rep. Pete Schwartzkopf, D-Rehoboth Beach. “Now, brewpubs can distill alcohol from local peaches and strawberries, wineries can produce a wider variety of wines and wineries, brewpubs and distilleries all can expand their operations as they become more successful.”

“One of the great things about being part of this industry in our state is the way all of the local companies support each another and succeed together,” said Sam Calagione, Dogfish Head Founder and President. “At Dogfish Head, we were proud to work with everyone involved in creating this law, which provides an exciting opportunity for all of us to expand our product lines and reach more consumers.”