

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Authorizing the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages by Certain License and Permit Holders for Takeout and Delivery

05/15/2020

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed legislation (A3966), authorizing the sale and delivery of alcoholic beverages by the holders of certain retail consumption licenses and concessionaire permits during the COVID-19 state of emergency.

Under the bill, the holder of plenary retail consumption licenses, hotel or motel licenses, seasonal retail consumption licenses, or concessionaire permits, generally issued to bars and restaurants, would be permitted to sell and deliver alcoholic beverages in original containers or in closed and sealed containers and mixed cocktails in closed and sealed containers for consumption off the licensed premises during the state of emergency.

The bill would also allow craft distillery licensees to sell for consumption off the licensed premises distilled alcoholic beverages that are manufactured on the licensed premises and mixed or blended with other alcoholic or nonalcoholic beverages and sold in closed and sealed containers. Additionally, the bill would allow craft distilleries to sell distilled alcoholic beverages in original containers accompanied by one or more nonalcoholic beverages or food stuffs that may be combined by the consumer to prepare a mixed drink.

“New Jersey’s restaurant and hospitality industry, like so many other businesses, has suffered tremendous financial losses due to COVID-19,” **said Governor Murphy**. “Allowing business owners with certain licenses and permits to sell beverages directly to consumers is a creative way to alleviate some of their financial uncertainty.”

“Local restaurants and bars that relied heavily on taproom revenues are finding it tough to make ends meet,” **said Assemblyman John Burzichelli**. “This bill gives them a lifeline. It offers a chance to create more sustainable cash flow, so we can see the industry rebuild as we come out of this COVID-19 pandemic.”

“Despite their own struggles, distilleries have come to our aid and established themselves as selfless partners in this fight by shifting some of their production to hand sanitizer,” **said Assemblyman Roy Freiman**. “Giving them some financial leeway is how we thank them for their role in helping keep us all safe.”

“During my communications with our restaurant owners, they repeatedly asked for us to get this done,” **said Assemblywoman Serena DiMaso**. “This will help increase their sales and revenue during the Covid-19 pandemic.”

“Restaurants and our hospitality businesses have been uniquely impacted by the COVID-19 public health crisis, and we need to do all we can to help this vital industry stay afloat,” **said Senator Vin Gopal**. “With dining rooms and bars closed across our state, it makes no sense to ban restaurants and craft beverage

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manufacturers from offering alcoholic beverages for takeout and delivery, especially when liquor stores are already empowered to do the same. Allowing them to continue selling cocktails and other beverages directly to customers will be a small way to help this hard-hit industry regain some of the revenues they've lost."

"Responsible residents who have been prisoners in their own homes can now buy cocktails made by their favorite bartenders for virtual happy hours with friends, and remote socializing," **said Senator Declan O'Scanlon**. "Eliminating some of the confusion in the marketplace helps restaurants and other enterprises, and provides desperately needed opportunities for out-of-work New Jerseyans - particularly bartenders. Small businesses with liquor licenses can use the help while the lockdown remains in effect."

"Allowing restaurants to expand their opportunities to serve their customers will generate the much needed revenue they need," **said Marilou Halvorsen, President & CEO of the New Jersey Restaurant & Hospitality Association**. "We appreciate the bill sponsors, legislature, and Governor's support on this bill."

The bill would expire six months following the date: (1) on which the state of emergency has ended; or (2) on which the coronavirus-related occupancy or customer seating restrictions no longer apply to the licensed premises, whichever occurs later.

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