

## NEWS:

# Delawareans Among Minority of Americans Barred from Having Wine Shipped to their Homes



**DECEMBER 13, 2019** -- If you were thinking of buying a fellow Delawarean a gift membership in a Wine of the Month Club, think again.

Delaware is one of only five states prohibiting residents from purchasing wine and having it shipped directly to their homes. The residents of the other [45 states](#) which allow some form of direct shipment collectively account for 95-percent of the nation's population.

Delawareans wishing to buy wine not found on the shelves of their local stores can only legally obtain it through a process that channels all alcoholic beverage sales through a three-tier system of distributors, wholesalers, and retailers that was established following Prohibition.

According to the National Association of American Wineries, there are more than 10,000 wineries in the U.S. A large percentage of these enterprises are too small to have relationships with distributors, making it impossible to get their products in Delaware.

Consumers may not be the only ones hurt by Delaware's antiquated laws. Despite past opposition from Delaware wine sellers, studies done by officials in Virginia and Maryland revealed that retail wine sales increased following the enactment of direct shipment laws in those states.

There have been numerous attempts over the last decade in Delaware to allow limited home wine delivery, but all of those efforts have failed. One measure came close last year, initially winning approval in both chambers, only to be defeated in a second House vote after the bill had been amended in the Senate.

The latest incarnation of the legislation, [Senate Bill 49](#), sponsored by Sen. Dave Sokola, has been pending action in the Senate Banking, Business & Insurance since last March.

The proposal would...

- ...require carriers, like FedEx and UPS, to obtain special licenses to handle wine shipments.
- ...mandate special labeling of the packages.

- ...not allow direct sales if the wine can be acquired by a Delaware retailer.
- ...require licensing of wineries shipping their products to Delaware.
- ...impose the same state alcohol taxes levied on retail sales.
- ...restrict deliveries to adults over the age of 21 that signed for the package.
- ...limit households to no more than three cases of wine per year.

House Republicans -- **State Reps. Danny Short, Jeff Spiegelman, Lyndon Yearick, and Michael Smith** -- are co-sponsors of the bipartisan bill.