

Testimony before the House Republican Policy Committee
Wednesday, September 7th, 2022 – 10:30am - Noon
Wallenpaupack Brewing Company, Hawley, PA
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Treasurer, Brewers of PA

Welcome, Rep. Fritz and members of the committee, to Wallenpaupack Brewing Company. Thank you for taking the time to meet with us today and hear our testimony. Just 6 short years ago a vacant, vandalized former Arby's building sat on this very location. Mold ridden and neglected for over 10 years, the building was a true eye sore in this beautiful, Pocono mountains community. Frequenting the lake for leisure, I saw a much-needed opportunity for not just another restaurant, but a true community-focused space where people could gather, engage in conversation and have a good beer and a bite to eat. Today we sit in the addition I had to add to our original footprint just 8 short months after opening our doors.

Approaching our 5th anniversary at the end of this month, we've achieved incredible notoriety in the craft beer industry, manufacturing some of the best beers in the country. Most recently we were awarded the title of, World's Best Cream Ale, for our flagship Paupack Cream Ale at the World Beer Awards. We

were just one of 6 US breweries to achieve a “World’s Best” status and the only brewery from Pennsylvania.

From the day we opened our doors, we’ve served a diverse population of guests.

On any given day, you can walk through my parking lot and see plates from NY, NJ, MD, CT, VT and beyond. Breweries aren’t just a taproom, restaurant or pub – they are a destination, an attraction for locals and visitors alike.

Some of the most memorable moments I’ve had since opening our doors have been mothers seeking me out as I walk through the brewpub to literally hug me and thank me for making the lake “cool” again. I’ve heard many stories of families who have had homes in the Poconos for generations and their children had lost interest in returning for family vacations as they grew up and left home. I’ve had many parents tell me all they had to say was “brewery” and their adult children were vested in returning to the lake for a visit.

Since opening our doors, other great businesses attractions have opened giving visitors more great things to do like riding the rail bikes downtown or throwing axes at the indoor lanes just up the road.

The craft beer industry is very much about what's new and what's next. Growth and product innovation fuel interest from our consumers. Last year for us, that materialized in us utilizing one of our storage location permits and opening a second location a few miles from here. The location has been successful and demand for our product continues to grow.

What comes next for us is what keeps me up at night. It often feels like our growth and the growth of the industry have outpaced much needed industry policy changes, leaving us without the flexibility we need to pivot as consumer demand grows and changes.

I sincerely hope that you'll remember our testimony today and support the much-needed policy changes we seek that impact the future our industry. We desperately need modernization and equity to continue to keep the momentum going. One of my favorite quotes is inscribed on the wall in the business building at my alma mater, The University of Scranton – "To whom much is given, much is expected". Given the policy changes we seek, you can expect much will be

returned back in economic development, job creation, tax revenue and notoriety for Pennsylvania as a leader in the craft beer industry.