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**Testimony to the House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee
Opposing HB2292 – Allowing Felons to Dispense Alcohol
February 20, 2017**

Chairman Jennings and Committee Members,

Our associations oppose HB2292. We are sympathetic to the concerns of persons who made life choices leading to felony convictions who are now trying to find employment. We support reentry programs. We also would agree there are a limited number of felonies that we don't believe should prohibit a person from dispensing alcohol. However, as written, the bill swings the pendulum from too far on one side to too far on the other.

We believe persons with convictions for person felonies, drug felonies, and certain non-person felonies such as identity theft and credit card fraud should not be allowed to dispense alcohol. We also believe consideration should be given to prohibiting persons with repeat felonies. In many of the environments where alcohol is served, some people will become less guarded to being taken advantage of due to their alcohol intake leaving them more vulnerable to victimization. We also find a small percentage of businesses to be centers for illegal gambling, trafficking in firearms and drugs, centers for prostitution and human trafficking, and other criminal activity.

We see no harm in a person convicted of some felonies dispensing alcohol. For example, felony driving while suspended, nonsupport of a child, odometer fraud, official misconduct, felony election violations, and others.

But hopefully we would all agree a person with a felony conviction of rape, child pornography, identity theft, furnishing alcohol to a minor for illicit purposes, and other such felonies should preclude a person from dispensing alcohol.

We also acknowledge there is a difference in the setting in which the dispensing is taking place. A full service restaurant is different from a dance club is different from selling beer in a grocery store.

However, this bill takes none of those things into consideration. We are compelled to oppose this bill in its present form.

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