

Connecticut: Sunday liquor sales in Connecticut not happening

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With most of the legislature's major business accomplished, what ever happened to an issue that everyone was talking about a few months ago... the proposal to have Connecticut join most of the other states, and allow liquor, wine, and beer sales on Sundays?

Earlier this year, a public opinion poll showed a large majority of Connecticut residents favoring the Sunday sales, and one study said it would raise millions of dollars.

Governor Malloy said he favored the idea, but he did not include it in his budget, although tax hikes on beer, wine, and liquor are included.

Democratic State Representative Kathy Tallarita of Enfield is the principle advocate for Sunday sales in the House. She admitted Wednesday that this year it's a lost cause, and says many of her colleagues are afraid to vote for it.

"They're afraid of telling that package store in their district that they support allowing them to open on Sunday if they chose to do so. They're afraid of that," Tallarita said.

Republican State Senator John Kissel of Enfield is the principle advocate in the Senate.

"The 'mom and pop' stores in particular are very much mobilized on this issue to fight back on it," he said.

And their association is represented by lobbyist Carroll Hughes, who says he was able to prove that there would be almost no additional revenue, and the expense of the extra day would be too much for many small stores.

"I understand the convenience factor. That was what they said over and over again, but you know, when somebody's going to lose their business, lose their jobs, not be able to pay for the food for the family, you know, somebody's convenience can suffer a little bit," Hughes said.

Hughes says he and the association will mobilize against this again next session. The advocates of Sunday sales say they will continue the battle because they feel the public at large, is on their side.