



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Tennessee Join FTC in 2009 Campaign to Curb Underage Drinking**

*Beverage Alcohol Industry, Federal Government Partner to Continue  
"We Don't Serve Teen" Initiative*

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** – The Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Tennessee (WSWT) will partner with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) this fall on the 2009 "We Don't Serve Teens" campaign, a public awareness initiative aimed at curbing underage drinking.

Tennessee wholesalers will distribute "We Don't Serve Teens" campaign materials to restaurants and retail wine and spirits outlets across the state. The retail outlets will display the materials - which include stickers, posters and vinyl "clings" – to remind customers that it is not only illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to buy alcoholic beverages, but it is also illegal for underage persons to consume alcohol.

"Underage drinking continues to be a problem, not only in Tennessee, but across the country," said Thomas E. Bernard, president of WSWT. "As an industry, we are committed to protecting the youth in our communities by preventing their access to alcohol and also spreading the message to customers that they should never serve teens, not even in their own homes."

Founded by the FTC in 2007, "We Don't Serve Teens" confronts the pervasive problem of alcohol use among the underage population. According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism of the National Institutes of Health, there are an estimated 10.8 million underage drinkers in the U.S. Forty-five percent of 12th graders, 34 percent of 10th graders and 17 percent of 8th graders reported using alcohol in the past month – more than cigarettes and marijuana combined.

Bernard said as the distributors of beverage alcohol in the state, members of WSWT feel a special responsibility to helping ensure that the laws of Tennessee governing alcohol are strongly enforced, and that an atmosphere of moderation, regulation and control is maintained.

The national "We Don't Serve Teens" Week was officially recognized in 2007 by the U.S. House and Senate with the passing of a resolution introduced by the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America. "The 'We Don't Serve Teens' campaign recognizes that all three tiers of the beverage alcohol industry play a key role in the prevention of underage drinking and unites all of those participants in a concerted effort to protect America's youth," the resolution states.

### **About "We Don't Serve Teens"**

The "We Don't Serve Teens" campaign is sponsored by a coalition of public and private sector organizations, including The Century Council, the Federal Trade Commission, Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America, Inc., the U.S. Department of Treasury Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, the

National Alcohol Beverage Control Association, Students Against Destructive Decisions, the National Liquor Law Enforcement Association, the Responsible Retailing Forum, the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, Inc., the National Consumers League and the American Beverage Licensees. For more information on the campaign or to order materials visit [www.dontserveteens.gov](http://www.dontserveteens.gov), prepared and maintained by the FTC.

**About Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Tennessee (WSWT)**

The Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Tennessee, a registered 501(c)(6) organization, is a statewide trade association comprised of 19 family-owned local businesses in Tennessee that play a central role in wine and spirits distribution. The mission of WSWT is to maintain the appropriate legal and regulatory environment for the distribution of beverage alcohol in the state of Tennessee so as to ensure the safe and responsible use of its products. Please visit [www.wswt.org](http://www.wswt.org) for more information.

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