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## Business

### Package Store Owners Divided Over Sunday Alcohol Sales

Some Say Opening On Sunday Will Help Their Businesses, Others Worry About Less Family Time  
By **Bree Shirvell** | [Email the author](#) | January 23, 2012

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For southeastern Connecticut package store owners and employees, Sunday is often their only day off. It's a day to spend time with family and friends, a day to catch up on household chores, and it's also a day they lose business.

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy wants to stop that lost revenue by [altering Connecticut's liquor laws](#) to, among other things, allow package, grocery and convenience stores to sell alcohol on Sundays.

According to the governor, Connecticut liquor stores lose approximately \$570 million annually in revenue to neighboring states, including Rhode Island, where thirsty customers can cross the state line to buy their booze on Sundays.

But package store owners in southeastern Connecticut are divided over the governor's proposal. Some support Sunday sales, while others worry about losing family time.

**Hilltop Wine and Spirits** owner Sanjay Vachhani said he already works six days a week, and would feel forced to open on Sundays if the state lifts the ban on Sunday alcohol sales.

"My son would never see me; I'd get a divorce from my wife," the Groton package store owner said.

While Vachhani doesn't support the governor's proposal, other package store owners support parts of the governor's plan to move the state away from its puritanical roots.

Gary Trombley Jr., owns **Big Gary's Montville Wine & Spirits**, and wants to be able to open on Sundays.

"Sunday sales would help my business—it would increase sales," Trombley said. "I have eight employees and they are willing to work on Sundays."

Trombley, however, does not support the governor's proposal for package stores to stay open until 10 p.m. instead of 9 p.m., and he is against easing some of the restrictions on grocery stores.

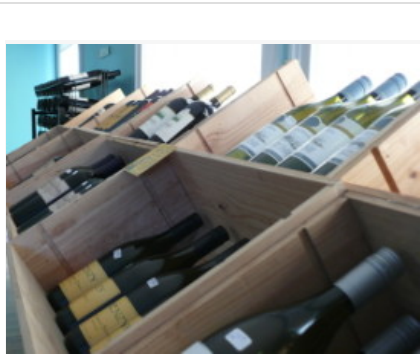
"The grocery stores don't play by the same rules," Trombley said, adding that when issued an infraction, a package store closes its entire business for three days but grocery stores only close the beer sales for three days.

"That's not fair," Trombley said.

While Big Gary's would open on Sundays if allowed, Trombley said that Sunday sales would benefit him because of his shop location, and his medium-size store. He does not believe that Sunday sales would benefit everyone.

The governor's proposal does not require package stores to open on Sundays it only allows them to open.

Kevin Wildes, owner of **Cask'n Keg** in Mystic does not know if he would open on Sunday if the proposal



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passes.

"I haven't decided if we would stay open," Wildes said. "I guess we'd have to see."

Wildes, though, said he would never support lifting the ban on Sunday alcohol sales.

"I like the day off," Wildes said. "It's my time to spend with my family."

The Connecticut state legislature must pass Malloy's proposal for Sunday alcohol sales to be a reality.

Would you buy alcohol on Sundays? [Tell us in the comments.](#)

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**neal**

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10:57 am on Monday, January 23, 2012

This Governor ruined Stamford as a mayor bowing down to big business and he will ruin the State of CT , He can care less about the small working man or family. Also watch as drunk driving deaths increase in CT

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**Chuck Ruffin**

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5:17 pm on Monday, January 23, 2012

Currently I drive to RI to buy alcohol on Sunday. If stores were open in the state my money would stay here. If owners don't want to open on Sunday, don't open. True of any business. Some restaurants close Mondays. People still travel and eat Mondays. No issue there.

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**Karen Hall**

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9:36 pm on Tuesday, January 24, 2012

I can imagine only exceptional circumstances where someone would have the absolute need to drive to R.I. to buy alcohol on a Sunday. There are six other days in which to get that done.

I would feel bad for the smaller businesses in which the owners probably run them mostly by themselves - Sunday is their only day off for family time.

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**Larry Walker**

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7:57 pm on Wednesday, January 25, 2012

the majority of the consumers should have the right to buy on Sundays, enough of the outdated laws that protect a few business owners. Time for CT to leap frog into the 21st century already.

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