

Why Voting Yes On Alcohol Props is Good for Ruston

**Yes 'EM All
Vote YES**

Ruston Restaurants & Retailers

In 2002, Ruston voters approved an effort led by the Ruston Chamber of Commerce and voted in three levels of alcohol sales. Retail stores could sell alcohol of 6% or less alcohol content—basically beer and low volume wine or wine coolers, but it had to be consumed off the premise (Prop 1). Voters approved mixed beverage sales in restaurants (Prop 5) And also passed 6% or less for on-premise consumption—which applies to both restaurants or a stand-alone bar—that could only sell beer and wine coolers. (Prop 2)

That's right. Stand-alone bars have actually been legal in Ruston for more than 20 years.

Current Alcohol Election

Last fall, more than 3,000 Ruston voters signed a petition calling for an election to allow expanded alcohol sales in Ruston. The main issue was to allow higher quality wine and spirits to be sold in retail grocery stores, and that is why the issue is supported by Walmart and Brookshire Grocery Company (Super 1). So if you want to buy a nice bottle of wine at the grocery store, vote for Prop 4.

But, Louisiana State law requires that all five versions of alcohol sales must be put before voters, even those that have already been approved, when something new is being considered. The two new proposals now up for consideration would allow higher than 6% alcohol content beverages, which is craft beers, wine and liquor. Prop 4 would allow higher content alcohol sales in retailers such as Walmart, Super 1, and the locally-owned Ruston's Grocery. Prop 3 would allow higher content in bars that do not serve food.

Protecting our Community

The Ruston City Council has taken significant steps to protect the City's character so that if the new measures are approved by voters, protections are in place.

Prop 4—would only allow beer/wine/liquor to be sold in retail stores that

are 15,000 square feet or larger, and sell other products. Currently, only Super 1, Walmart, Ruston's Grocery and Super Saver are large enough. But, passage of this measure would increase the likelihood that other grocery store chains may come to Ruston.

Prop 3—although no bars have opened in Ruston since being approved in 2002, passage of Prop 3 would allow new bar bars to apply to open a location in our downtown entertainment district. As a protection, no bar could be located any closer than 1,320 feet from another bar. This limits the total number of potential bars to two.

2023 Effort—Economic Impact & Tax Revenue

Every day, people drive to Monroe or Grambling to purchase fine wine and spirits—and Ruston not only loses the revenue from those sales, taxpayers also lose the revenue from all the other shopping they do while in those towns. People don't just buy the alcohol and then come back to Ruston to shop at our stores – they buy everything on their shopping list. Grocery stores report that for every \$1 lost in alcohol sales, they lose an additional \$3 in other sales—that can be as much as \$25,000 to \$150,000 per week in lost revenue based on the size of the store. That money, and the tax revenue it generates, need to be kept in Ruston, working for all.

Based on Ruston's population, studies show that by reaffirming what is already legal and allowing craft beer, higher content wine and liquor sales in our stores, Ruston could be gaining as much as \$2.2 million per year in additional sales tax. This includes an estimated \$900,000 due to Ruston's share of a special tax incentive that can only be used for roads and infrastructure improvements.

How You Can Help—GO VOTE

Help keep our tax dollars in Ruston and Lincoln Parish, and give people the choice of shopping locally for all their purchases, by voting Yes on All 5 Props during early voting through March 18, or on Election Day, March 25.



Ruston (LP) Alcohol Impact (7.78% of Sales Tax)

Police Jury Sales Tax	\$389,088
Sheriff's Dept.	\$129,696
School Board	\$1,296,959
Ruston	\$1,296,959
Ruston TID Infrastructure	\$923,435
Total All Local Taxes	\$4,036,136
Ruston Total	\$2,220,394

Source: *Economic Impact Study* by Dr. Ray Perryman, 2008.

Election Day March 25 ★ For more information go to www.LouisianaEGC.com

Pd Pol Ad by Louisiana Economic Growth Committee