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Flying Squirrel Bar To Host Fix The Beer Cap Rally Friday

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

The brewers will be at the Flying Squirrel Bar on Friday from 7-9 p.m. for the Fix the Beer Cap rally.

The rally will feature local brewers themselves, hoping to raise the cap on alcohol brewing to 12 percent alcohol by volume. The brewers will be serving up their beer and helping people contact their legislators to voice the need for these law changes, said officials.

The current laws on the books in Tennessee define "beer" as a beverage with an alcohol content of not more than 5 percent by weight which translates to roughly 6.2 percent ABV. Anything above this line is considered "liquor." What this means for brewers is that if they want to brew beer over 6.2 percent ABV they first must obtain a distiller's license which is \$1,000 annually. If they then wanted to pour that beer in their tap room, they would then need a liquor-by-the-drink license at \$4,000 annually with the added requirement of having 15 percent of gross sales come from food sales, says John Carr, beer manager for Flying Squirrel Bar.



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"The current cap at 5 percent ABW is stifling small business growth in Tennessee along with dissuading other breweries from coming into the state because of a lack of a viable market in which to sell their beer," said Mr. Carr. "Currently, any beer over 5 percent ABW can only be sold in liquor stores, this severely limits the fastest growing segment of the beer industry.

"The fix for all of these troubles would be to follow suit with almost every other state in the southeast and raise the cap to 12 percent ABV," said Mr. Carr. "There are two bills, a House version and a Senate version, which will come up for vote in March to attempt to make this happen. Our purpose is to educate Chattanooga on this issue and give them the tools needed to help get these bills passed."



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