

June 2, 2026

Sent via email

Subject: Missed deadline on direct-to-consumer alcohol agreement

Dear CIT Representatives:

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing 103,000 small- and medium-sized businesses across Canada. We are writing to express our concern regarding the lack of progress and transparency surrounding the implementation of direct-to-consumer alcohol shipment.

All provincial governments and the Yukon signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Direct-to-Consumer (DTC) Alcohol sales in early 2025, with the promise to fully implement DTC by the end of May 2026. The deadline has now passed with no visible progress and no clear public accounting of next steps.

To date, New Brunswick and Manitoba stand as the only jurisdictions to allow shipment of all Canadian alcohol products without additional administrative barriers or markups. In contrast, most jurisdictions remain in none to limited arrangements that fall well short of the commitment's governments agreed to deliver. This gap between commitment and delivery is increasingly difficult to justify. Canadian brewers, distillers and vintners are left asking: why?

CFIB data shows strong support for reform, with 77% of small businesses citing that Canadians should have the freedom to order Canadian wine, beer, and craft spirits directly from producers in any province or territory without restrictions. We recognize and appreciate recent movements from jurisdictions such as Nova Scotia and Ontario. However, these measures remain limited in scope and do not constitute full implementation of the DTC commitment.

Eliminating the rules that restrict DTC alcohol shipments are a critical early test of whether governments are prepared to follow through on long-standing promises to reduce interprovincial trade barriers. The failure to meet the agreed-upon timeline for DTC implementation raises broader concerns about the delivery of other internal trade commitments, such as the Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement (CMRA) on the Sale of Goods awaiting full implementation by June, and services slated for the end of 2026.

At a time when Canada is facing weak economic conditions, and a growing gap between business closures and new business creation, small businesses cannot afford additional uncertainty, nor absorb the

continued friction created by preventable interprovincial barriers. In the context of ongoing external trade pressures, Canada cannot credibly call for greater reliance on domestic markets while continuing to restrict access within its own borders.

CFIB urges your government to publicly clarify the timeline for the full implementation of DTC alcohol shipment by **June 15** and to take concrete step in coordination with all other signing jurisdictions, to ensure the commitments made are fully delivered without delay.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions/concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to CFIB.

Sincerely,



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Executive Vice-President,
Advocacy



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Sr. Director, Interprovincial
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Sr. Policy Analyst,
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Cc: Dominic LeBlanc, Minister for Canada-US Trade and Intergovernmental Affairs, Internal Trade and One Canadian Economy