



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
BRUCE RAUNER

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Video from the event can be found [here](#).

New law removes small business barrier

Governor signs SB 2436, sends liquor control issue back to local leaders

CHICAGO — A new law signed today by Gov. Bruce Rauner does away with an archaic and burdensome obstacle to small business development throughout the state.

The Liquor Control Act of 1934 prohibited the sale of alcohol within 100 feet of a religious institution, school, hospital or military station, and demanded that any exemption would require General Assembly approval. Senate Bill 2436, which passed both Houses with strong bipartisan support, places such exemptions back into the hands of local liquor commissioners, effective immediately.

“Today’s bill signing is a clear example of bipartisan cooperation in Springfield to reform a broken system,” Rauner said. “Entrepreneurs should not have to pass a state law to open a new business. SB 2436 streamlines this process and empowers local officials to decide what is best for their communities.”

The bill signing, conducted at Eggsperience Café in Chicago, was greeted with enthusiasm by the Small Business Advocacy Council and numerous entities that partnered with the SBAC in support of the legislation’s passage.

“The outdated statute was an obstacle to the growth of local economies, often in areas where new opportunities are needed most,” said SBAC President and Founder Elliot Richardson. “SB 2436 reforms this process so that rather than painting all communities with a single brush, local leaders can determine the restrictions that best serve their businesses and residents.”

The Liquor Control Act of 1934 became law in Illinois shortly after Prohibition was repealed. Most small business owners had neither the time nor the resources to pursue

having a bill drafted, passed by legislators who may reside hundreds of miles away from their location, and signed by the governor. According to a recent business news account, only 75 businesses received a General Assembly-approved exemption in the 1934 Act's 84-year history.

Chicago entrepreneurs faced even more challenges than those in other municipalities prior to today's bill signing, said Sen. Chris Nybo, R-Elmhurst.

"Other local municipalities had been given much more power to determine liquor licenses at their local liquor control commission because they qualified for more statutory exemptions to the rule," he said. "This bill will remove the practice of businesses being required to ask support from local leaders and aldermen to receive legislation in Springfield for their license. This is a good government bill that is about local control."

"This law is common sense. It will cut red tape for small business and the hospitality industry," said Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, D-Chicago, chief sponsor in the House. "Rather than requiring legislators from all corners of the state to decide the fate of a business license from hundreds of miles away, this new law gives the decision making to local governments — exactly where it should be."

Members of the coalition in support of SB 2436 included the Austin, Edgewater, Illinois, Lakeview, Lakeview East, Lincoln Park, Lincoln Square Ravenswood and Little Village chambers of commerce as well as the Illinois Restaurant Association and the Institute for Justice Clinic on Entrepreneurship.

Small businesses account for more than a 60 percent share of companies in the food service, accommodation and entertainment industries — adding up to more than 350,000 jobs, according to the 2017 U.S. Small Business Administration Profile for Illinois.