

HB5381



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB5381

Introduced 2/10/2026, by Rep. Theresa Mah

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Illinois Grape and Wine Industry Act. Provides that an annual appropriation equal to \$0.50 per gallon of wine reported and paid by wine manufacturers in the State under the excise tax rate set forth by law shall be directed to the Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Alliance. Sets forth mechanisms for the calculation of the annual appropriation and administration of the Act. Effective immediately.

LRB104 18760 HLH 32203 b

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Illinois Grape and Wine Industry Act.

6 Section 5. Findings and purpose.

7 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

8 (1) The Illinois grape and wine industry is a vital
9 component of this State's agricultural economy,
10 contributing significantly to job creation, tourism, and
11 rural development.

12 (2) Grapes are the highest value specialty crop in the
13 United States.

14 (3) The Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Alliance,
15 established in 1992, has played a pivotal role in
16 supporting the growth and sustainability of the industry
17 through research, education, marketing, and operational
18 initiatives.

19 (4) The Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Alliance
20 represents stakeholders across this State through its
21 Board of Directors, which ensures equitable statewide
22 representation from the 4 distinct regions of Illinois.

23 (5) To ensure the retention and expansion of the

1 Illinois grape and wine industry, additional funding is
2 necessary to support these critical activities.

3 (b) The purpose of this Act is to establish a dedicated
4 funding mechanism to provide financial support for the
5 Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Alliance's efforts in
6 promoting and sustaining the Illinois grape and wine industry.

7 Section 10. Funding mechanism.

8 (a) An annual appropriation equal to \$0.50 per gallon of
9 wine reported and paid by wine manufacturers in this State
10 under the excise tax rate set forth by law shall be directed to
11 the Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Alliance.

12 The allocation shall apply exclusively to excise taxes
13 collected from wine manufacturers in this State as reported on
14 Form RL-26 or a successor form prescribed by the Department of
15 Revenue.

16 (b) All funds appropriated under this Section shall be
17 used by the Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Alliance for
18 the following purposes:

19 (1) research initiatives aimed at improving grape
20 cultivation, wine making processes, and sustainability
21 practices;

22 (2) educational programs for grape growers,
23 winemakers, and industry stakeholders;

24 (3) marketing campaigns to promote Illinois wines
25 locally, nationally, and internationally; and

1 (4) operational expenses necessary for the Illinois
2 Grape Growers and Vintners Alliance to effectively execute
3 its mission of supporting industry retention and
4 expansion.

5 (c) The first allocation of funds shall be calculated
6 based on excise taxes reported by wine manufacturers in this
7 State over the immediately preceding 12-month period before
8 the effective date of this Act. The Department of Revenue
9 shall certify the allocation amount no later than 90 days
10 after the enactment for appropriation to the Illinois Grape
11 Growers and Vintners Alliance.

12 (d) For subsequent years, the Department of Revenue shall
13 calculate on an annual basis the total gallons reported by
14 wine manufacturers in this State on Form RL-26 or its
15 successor form for the preceding calendar year. The Department
16 of Revenue shall certify the corresponding allocation amount
17 at \$0.50 per gallon for appropriation to the Illinois Grape
18 Growers and Vintners Alliance no later than March 31 each
19 year.

20 (e) The Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Alliance shall
21 submit an annual report to the Department of Agriculture
22 detailing the use of funds appropriated under this Act. The
23 report shall include:

- 24 (1) a summary of research projects conducted;
25 (2) educational programs delivered;
26 (3) marketing activities undertaken;

- 1 (4) operational expenditures incurred; and
2 (5) measurable outcomes achieved in supporting the
3 grape and wine industry in this State.

4 Section 15. Governance and representation.

5 (a) The Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Alliance Board
6 of Directors shall maintain statewide representation through a
7 balanced structure that ensures equitable participation from
8 all regions of this State.

9 (b) The Board shall consist of 12 members who represent
10 the 4 geographic regions of this State as follows:

- 11 (1) 3 representatives of the North region;
12 (2) 3 representatives of the Central region;
13 (3) 3 representatives of the South Central region; and
14 (4) 3 representatives of the South region.

15 (c) The Board members shall be selected in accordance with
16 the Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Alliance's bylaws to
17 ensure fair representation of grape growers, winemakers, and
18 other stakeholders throughout this State.

19 Section 20. Administration.

20 (a) The Department of Revenue shall oversee calculations
21 related to gallons reported by wine manufacturers in this
22 State under Form RL-26 or its successor form.

23 (b) The Department of Agriculture shall administer the
24 disbursement of funds appropriated under this Act to the

1 Illinois Grape Growers and Vintners Alliance in accordance
2 with the laws of this State.

3 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
4 becoming law.