



AT THE BAR WITH BOWDITCH

A Legal Blog for the Craft Brewing Community

The Gift That Keeps On Giving: Beer Donations To Nonprofits

BY AIVI NGUYEN • JANUARY 18, 2017

As of right now, Massachusetts nonprofits cannot accept donations of beer to be served at any fundraising event except through the distributor of that particular beer. By way of examples, here are some donations that are not currently allowed under the law:

- A person cannot buy 20 cases of beer and donate it to a 5k road race that is raising money for a nonprofit animal shelter.
- A brewer cannot give 2 kegs of her special beer to be served at a frozen polar plunge raising money for a nonprofit youth education organization.
- The local package store cannot donate \$1,000 worth of beer for a charity gala raising money for a nonprofit cancer research corporation.

You get the point.

However, there is currently a proposed bill, [Bill H. 248](#), that could change this and make the examples given above legal donations, permissible under the law. Bill H. 248 essentially provides that any legally recognized Massachusetts nonprofit company may accept donations of alcoholic beverages from any “individual, legally operating manufacturer, wholesaler and/or package store” to be served at fundraising events for the benefit of that specific nonprofit.

The proposed bill cleared the House in June and was given initial approval by the Senate last week. Massachusetts brewers should keep an eye on this bill – you may soon be able to donate your products to [directly support your favorite causes](#).