

# SOONER SURVEY

*Cole Hargrave  
Snodgrass & Associates*



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## Oklahomans Ready to Modernize Beer & Wine Laws

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A recent study reveals Oklahoma voters are beginning to clamor for changes in laws governing where beer and wine can be sold. We have seen substantial change since last looking at this issue in July of 2013. It is clear; the urban growth in Oklahoma, the explosion of the craft beer scene and a general mood for modernization is starting to sweep the state. Voters are now ready to both get rid of the state's 3.2 beer designation and to allow for the sale of wine in grocery stores.

When asked a simple question about whether or not wine should be available in grocery stores, 64% of Oklahoma voters answer in the affirmative while less than a third (31%) say they are opposed. What is striking is how much the numbers have changed in less than two years. In July of 2013, we asked the same question and while we still saw majority support (52% favor vs. 42% oppose) it had substantially less support than we see today. Much of this change has occurred in the Oklahoma City media market and among registered Republicans. Today,



60% of Republican primary voters favor allowing wine to be sold in grocery stores.

One key change is that intensity is now clearly on the side of proponents of change. Fully 40% of voters classify themselves as "strongly favoring" allowing wine to be sold in grocery stores. Only a quarter (25%) of voters "strongly oppose" this effort. The issue is equally supported by registered Republicans (63%) and registered Democrats and is slightly stronger in the Oklahoma City media market (67% favor) than

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in the Tulsa market (64% favor). Men remain more supportive (70%) than are women (58%).

We do see two strong correlations on this issue. As one might expect, we see a relationship with church attendance –but it is not as dramatic as one anticipates. Among the 23% who attend church more than once a week, support is only 38% while opposition is 57%. When you move, however, to the 29% who attend weekly, support skyrockets to 63% and then hits 77% among the 47% who attend less frequently. We also see an age correlation – though all age groups provide at least majority support for this change. While those under 45 are the most supportive (72% favor) and those between 45 and 65 are very supportive (68% favor), support starts to decrease among those between 65 and 75 (59% support) before declining to 50% support for those 75 or older.



On the elimination of the 3.2 designation of beer, I do not have an exact comparison. However, there is clear positive movement occurring on that front as well. In July of 2013 we asked voters if they favored or opposed the sale of single-strength beer in grocery stores. In that study, we found only 44% support. Today, when asked if Oklahoma should join the more than 40 other states that do not have a 3.2 designation for beer, we see 58% support. Again, this is not a

direct comparison, but given the change in attitudes toward wine, it is clear voters are becoming more supportive of change.

On the single-strength beer issue, we see much the same dynamic as exists on wine. Both genders are supportive, with men more supportive (63% favor) than are women. Even among women, however, there is a 20-point advantage in favor (53% favor vs. 33% oppose). Again, Republicans and Democrats have very similar numbers and Republican primary voters are supportive by more than double-digits. Perhaps most important is that among disaffected Republicans (the roughly 19% of Republicans dissatisfied with the job performance of the Governor and the Legislature) we see 65% support and only 24% opposition. This group of more affluent Republicans really leads the charge on these issues.

As Oklahoma's Republican party becomes younger and more urban, modernizing Oklahoma's liquor laws will become somewhat of a litmus test in Republican primaries. It will be a symbol of the changing party unless the legislature acts and puts it directly to a vote of the people.

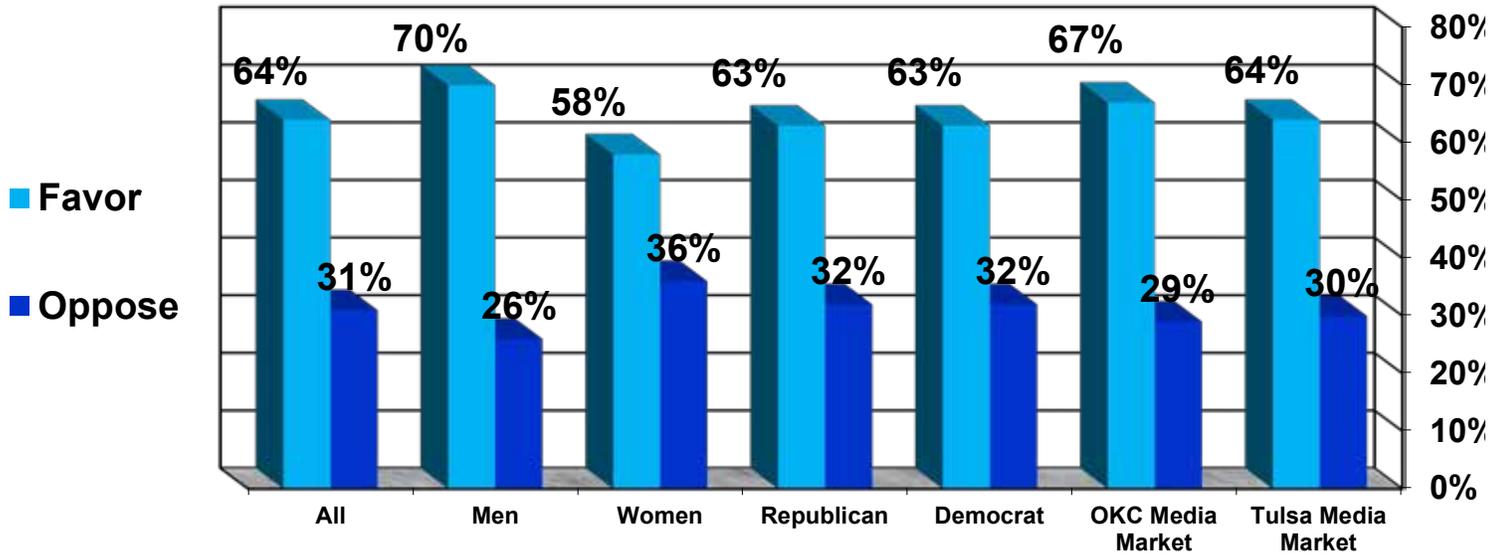


1. As you may or may not know, Oklahoma is one of only five states that have what is known as 3.2 beer. Would you favor or oppose Oklahoma getting rid of this designation and treating all beer the same much like it is in more than 40 other states? Would you say you strongly favor/oppose or only somewhat favor/oppose?
  - Strongly Favor.....42%
  - Somewhat Favor .....16%
  - Somewhat Oppose ..... 8%
  - Strongly Oppose.....22%
  - Undecided ..... 12%
  
2. It has been proposed that Oklahoma begin allowing for the sale of wine in grocery stores. Would you favor or oppose allowing Oklahoma grocery stores to sale wine? Would you say you strongly favor/oppose or only somewhat favor/oppose?
  - Strongly Favor..... 40%
  - Somewhat Favor .....24%
  - Somewhat Oppose ..... 6%
  - Strongly Oppose.....25%
  - Undecided ..... 5%

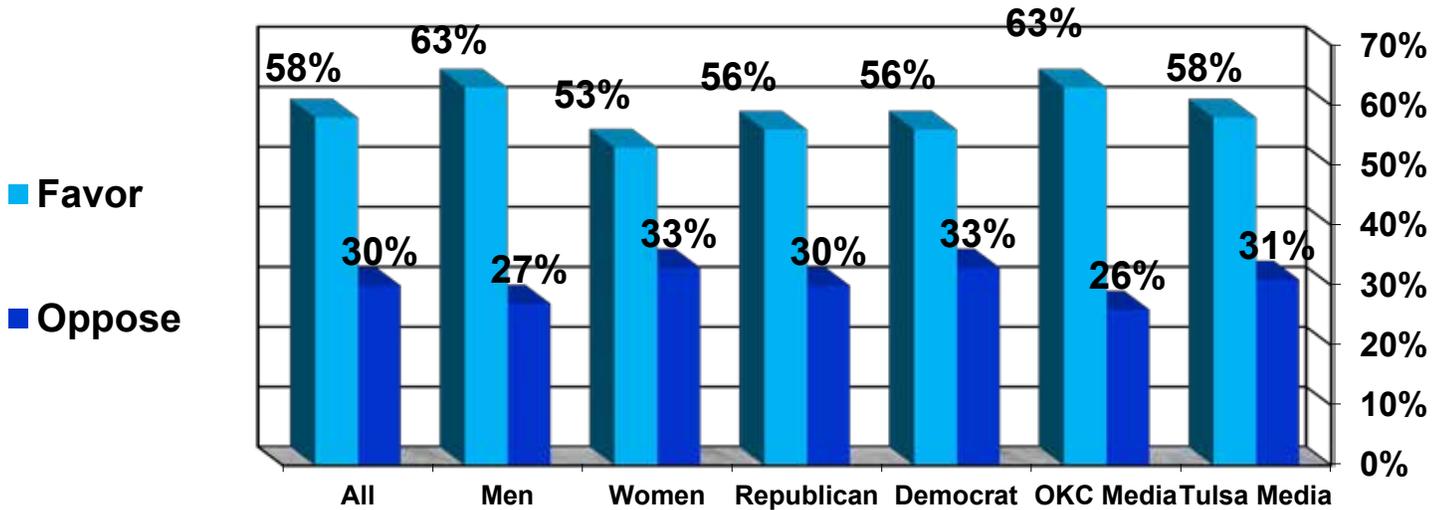
## Key Facts

- We have seen dramatic movement in the last two years toward greater support for liquor law changes.
- 64% now support the sale of wine in grocery stores, up from 51% in July 2013.
- 58% support Oklahoma getting rid of the 3.2 designation for beer.
- Republican primary voters are supportive of both changes, as are those who attend church on a weekly basis.
- Majorities of all age groups, including senior citizens and even those over 75 support allowing wine in grocery stores
- Rural voters are supportive of these changes as 57% support allowing wine to be sold in grocery stores and 53% support getting rid of the 3.2 designation – 20 points higher than those who oppose it.

# Grocery Store Wine?



# Do Away with Beer Differences?



During his more than 20 years with Cole Hargrave Snodgrass & Associates, Pat McFerron has supervised polling and telephone voter contact programs in more than 40 states – including polling for numerous successful gubernatorial, U.S. Senate, congressional and legislative clients throughout the nation. McFerron has been the pollster for all of the recent successful OKC initiatives, including Big League City, MAPs for Kids and MAPs 3, as well as Oklahoma’s historic right-to-work effort and many other state questions. McFerron also oversees marketing research projects for CHS clients who range from Fortune 100 companies to non-profits, universities and entrepreneurial start-ups.

This edition of Sooner Survey was taken March 15-19, 2015. It was a telephone survey of 500 registered voters in Oklahoma, including those on mobile lines. The confidence interval associated with this sample is that 95% of the time, the results are within 4.3% of the true values.

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