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NOTICE

TO: ALL LOCAL LICENSING AUTHORITIES AND ALL LICENSEES

DATE: April 30, 2009

RE: UNITED STATES PASSPORT CARD is acceptable identification for proof of age under M.G.L. c. 138, § 34B.

The United States Department of State announced that it has authorized the issuance of a "passport card." The State Department describes this new passport card as

a wallet-size card that can only be used for land and sea travel between the United States and Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda. The card will provide a less expensive, smaller, and more convenient alternative to the passport book for those who travel frequently to these destinations by land or by sea.

The passport card is designed for the specific needs of the northern and southern border resident communities and is not a globally interoperable travel document as is the traditional passport book. While the passport card has limited use, the passport book will remain the premier internationally accepted travel document.

The State Department stated that this passport card does "carry the rights and privileges of the U.S. passport book and will be adjudicated to the exact same standards."

General Laws chapter 138, § 34B provides in pertinent part that "[a]ny licensee, or agent or employee thereof, under this chapter who reasonably relies on ... a valid passport issued by the United States government ... for proof of a person's identity and age shall not suffer any modification, suspension, revocation or cancellation of such license, nor shall he suffer any criminal liability, for delivering or selling alcohol or alcoholic beverages to a person under twenty-one years of age."

The Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission advises the members of the local licensing authorities and all licensees that the Commission finds that a UNITED STATES PASSPORT CARD is acceptable identification for proof of age under M.G.L. c. 138, § 34B in the same manner as the U.S. passport book issued by the federal government.

Further information and frequently asked question about the new passport card may be found on the web-page of the United States Department of State at http://travel.state.gov/passport/ppt_card/ppt_card_3926.html.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES CONTROL COMMISSION