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January 2, 2026

The Honorable Representative Roger Williams
Chair, Committee on Small Business
2336 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nydia Velazquez
Ranking Member, Committee on Small Business
2302 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

RE: January 7 Hearing on Small Businesses

Chair Williams, Ranking Member Velazquez, and Committee Members,

I'm writing as the owner of a small winery that just celebrated our five-year anniversary, an accomplishment that should feel hopeful. Instead we find ourselves navigating the toughest business climate we've seen since we opened in 2020.

The wine industry is at a low point, and like many small producers, we rely heavily on direct-to-consumer sales to survive. But the basic costs of staying open have surged: our insurance has tripled because we operate in a fire zone, farming costs have climbed to the point that growing our own fruit is often more expensive than buying bulk, and shipping costs are up roughly fivefold since 2020. At the same time, consumer tastes and tasting-room trends have shifted, and customers increasingly expect "free shipping," even though cases of wine are heavy and genuinely expensive to ship.

We're also seeing vendors quietly add new line items and "service fees," and now tariffs are piling up on top of everything else, in ways that are hard for both businesses and consumers to track. For example, a recent purchase of 35,000 capsules included roughly \$1,100 in tariff charges, cork suppliers are now listing a "Liberation Day" tariff line item, and glass costs have become a moving target, with tariff rates bouncing dramatically (we've seen figures as high as 190%, then 55%, after previously being 47%). Worse, these costs are often not clearly labeled or consistently reported by suppliers, which means the true impact on small businesses is being undercounted and underreported; when tariffs are buried in invoices, the public never sees what's really happening.

We're trying to compare our tariff-related costs this year to last year, but the lack of transparency makes it difficult to quantify, and nearly impossible to explain to customers while we absorb the

hit. We can't simply raise prices to cover these increases, because consumers are already resisting higher bottle prices, and every additional cost squeezes our ability to keep staff employed, invest in the vineyard, and remain viable.

Please support tariff policies that don't punish small American producers and push for clear disclosure requirements so tariffs are itemized consistently throughout the supply chain. Small wineries like ours are being hit from every direction, and we need predictable policy and transparency to stay in business and keep contributing to our local economy.

Sincerely,

Jill Osur, President & CEO
Teneral Cellars Inc.