



CENTER FOR ALCOHOL POLICY

19th Annual Alcohol Law and Policy Conference Session Descriptions

Sheraton Minneapolis Downtown Convention Center
Minneapolis, MN | August 24-26, 2026

Alcohol and THC: Venn Diagrams and Distinct Circles

As the marketplace for intoxicating products continues to evolve, policymakers and regulators are increasingly being asked to consider where alcohol and THC products fit within existing legal and public health frameworks. While there are important points of comparison between the two, there are also meaningful distinctions in how these products are produced, marketed, consumed, regulated, and understood by the public. This panel will explore the similarities and differences between alcohol and THC from a regulatory, public policy, and public health perspective, including how those comparisons may inform current debates and future approaches at the state and federal levels.

Challenges of Stolen Alcohol

Building on the discussion from last year's panel, this session will revisit the issue of organized retail theft and examine how developments over the past year may affect alcohol retailers, distributors, suppliers, and regulators. As policymakers, law enforcement, and businesses continue to respond to evolving theft and resale concerns, this panel will explore what those trends mean for the alcohol industry and how existing regulatory frameworks may help address risks to businesses, consumers, and public safety.

The Changing Alcohol Marketplace

Is Per Capita Alcohol Consumption Up or Down? Who Are the Legal Drinking Age Drinkers of Today and Tomorrow? As policymakers, regulators, public health officials, and industry members consider changes in the alcohol marketplace and national demographics, questions about per capita alcohol consumption remain central to understanding broader trends. This session will examine the changing demographics of America, whether alcohol consumption is increasing or declining, what the data can and cannot tell us and how those trends may affect the industry, public health and the broader alcohol policy world.

Intellectual Property Issues Are for Everybody!

Intellectual property issues touch nearly every aspect of professional and personal life, from protecting ideas and creative work to understanding how content, technology, and branding can be used appropriately. This session will provide an overview of intellectual property basics and examine how emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, are creating new questions and challenges for individuals, alcohol regulators, and industry members. Charles Hildebrandt will discuss practical lessons, common pitfalls, and strategies for staying informed about IP issues while protecting valuable ideas and avoiding legal missteps.

Anti-Trust and Pricing

New developments in the marketplace have brought increased attention to dynamic and algorithmic pricing practices and the antitrust questions they may raise. As businesses, policymakers, and regulators consider whether and how these practices should be permitted, limited, or prohibited, this panel will examine how pricing technology is reshaping commercial decision-making and what those developments may mean for competition, compliance, and alcohol regulation.

Developments in Trade Practices

Trade practice rules remain a central part of the alcohol regulatory system, shaping how industry members interact across tiers and helping preserve fair competition in a highly regulated marketplace. This panel will examine current issues in alcohol trade practice enforcement and compliance, with attention to how longstanding legal principles apply to emerging business models, promotional strategies, and commercial relationships throughout the industry.

Keynote Address from North Dakota Attorney General Drew Wrigley

North Dakota Attorney General Drew Wrigley will deliver the keynote address, providing attendees with perspective on alcohol-related litigation, law enforcement, and public policy issues from the state attorney general's office. General Wrigley currently serves as the 30th Attorney General of North Dakota.

Legal Update: SCOTUS and Litigation Review

This annual legal update will review significant alcohol-related litigation and pending cases shaping the regulatory landscape across the country. The panel will highlight developments in federal and state courts, including matters before the U.S. Supreme Court, and consider how recent legal trends may affect alcohol regulation, industry practices, and public policy going forward.