



22nd September 2010

DISTILLERS WELCOME MINIMUM PRICE VOTE

Scotch Whisky distillers welcomed today's vote by the Scottish Parliament Health & Sport Committee to remove minimum pricing from the Alcohol (Scotland) Bill.

The vote at stage two of the legislative process is the second time the minimum price proposal has been defeated in a Scottish Parliamentary vote and underlines its lack of political support in Scotland.

Gavin Hewitt, Chief Executive of The Scotch Whisky Association, said:

“Today's Committee vote sends the clearest of signals that it is time to build consensus around alternative, more effective tax-based measures at a UK level to address alcohol misuse.

“Scotch Whisky distillers welcome the Opposition parties' recognition that minimum pricing would be ineffective and illegal. Minimum pricing would not address alcohol harm in Scotland but would cause significant damage to Scotch Whisky at home and abroad.

“There is a strong case for root and branch reform of the UK excise duty system so that all alcohol is taxed on a fair and responsible basis, according to alcohol content, with a legal 'floor price' introduced by banning sales below tax.”

- ENDS -

For further information please contact Campbell Evans (0131 222 9231 and 07768 002 262) or David Williamson (0131 222 9230 and 07730 496 151) at the SWA.