vinetur

Constellation Brands appeals order keeping its 18-year distributor tie in place

The move asks a court to pause the injunction during appeal in a closely watched test of supplier power before arbitration ends

Thursday, November 12, 2026



Constellation Brands has appealed a court order that prevents it from ending its relationship with Coors Distributing Co. and has also asked the court to put that order on hold while the appeal moves forward, according to Beer Business Daily.

The order at the center of the dispute is an injunction that keeps the current arrangement in place while arbitration continues. The disagreement involves a distribution contract that Beer Business Daily said has been in effect for 18 years.

The appeal adds a new step to a fight that could help define how far a supplier can go when it wants to replace a wholesaler before an arbitration panel reaches a final decision. By seeking a stay of the injunction, Constellation is asking the court to suspend the restrictions imposed by that order during the appeal, rather than waiting for the full arbitration process to end.

Beer Business Daily did not indicate in the material available what arguments Constellation raised in its appeal or which court is handling the matter. It also did not include a response from Coors Distributing Co. The outlet’s account focused on the procedural move itself: Constellation is challenging the injunction and is separately trying to stop it from remaining in force during the appellate process.

That procedural fight matters because disputes between alcohol suppliers and wholesalers often turn on timing as much as on the underlying contract terms. If a court keeps a distribution relationship in place during arbitration, the supplier may remain tied to a partner it is trying to leave for months or longer. If the injunction is lifted, the balance of leverage can shift quickly before the arbitrators decide whether the termination was allowed under the contract.

The case is also likely to draw attention across the beverage business because changing distributors can be one of the most sensitive decisions a beer, wine or spirits company makes in the United States. Supplier-wholesaler relationships are often long-running, and they are shaped not only by private contracts but also by state alcohol distribution rules that can make exits difficult and expensive. A court fight over whether a supplier can be forced to maintain a distributor relationship while arbitration is pending could influence how other companies assess their legal risk before trying to make similar changes.

For wholesalers, injunctions of this kind can be critical tools when they believe a supplier is moving too fast or in violation of a contract. For suppliers, those same orders can limit their ability to reshape distribution networks, pursue new strategies or move

business to another partner. That tension has made distributor termination cases a recurring issue in the alcohol industry, where market access depends heavily on established routes to retailers.

The appeal does not resolve the underlying dispute. It only opens a new round over whether the injunction should remain in place while the larger contract fight proceeds. Until the court rules on that request, and until the arbitration reaches its own conclusion, the 18-year relationship between Constellation and Coors Distributing Co. remains at the center of a closely watched test of distributor rights and supplier flexibility in the U.S. beverage market.