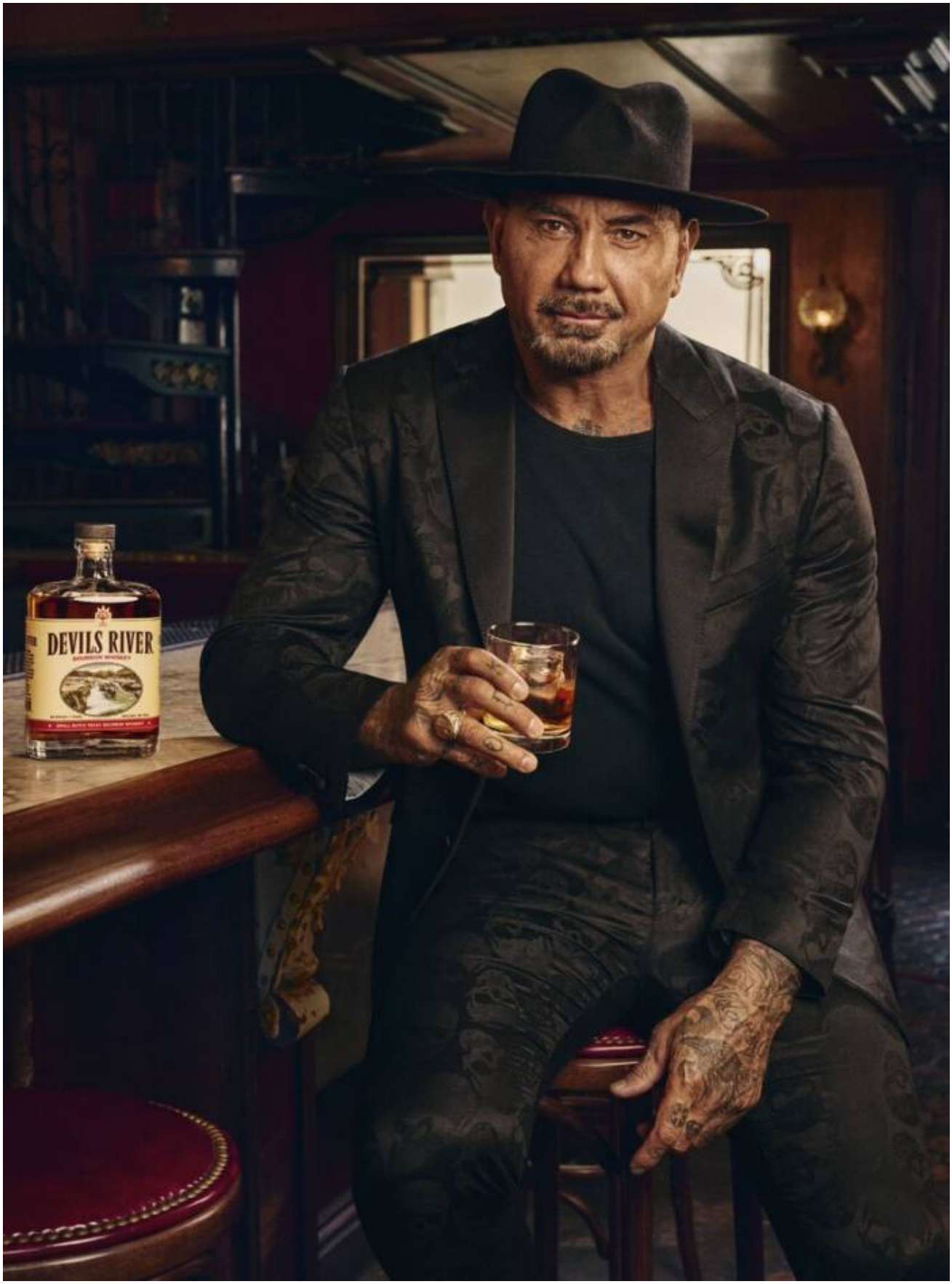
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# Devils River Distillery files for bankruptcy as Texas whiskey industry faces mounting financial pressures

San Antonio-based producer seeks reorganization amid rising costs, supply chain issues, and increased competition in the craft spirits sector

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DEVILS RIVER

Devils River Distillery, a whiskey producer based in San Antonio, Texas, has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection under Subchapter V in the US Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Texas. The filing comes less than a year after actor Dave Bautista, known for his roles in “Guardians of the Galaxy” and “Dune,” joined the company as an investor in October 2023. At that time, company founder Mike Cameron expressed optimism that Bautista’s involvement would help raise the profile of Devils River Whiskey and support its ambitions to lead the diversification of bourbon culture and elevate Texas whiskey.

The bankruptcy documents show that Devils River Distillery reported assets between $1 million and $10 million, with liabilities ranging from $50,001 to $100,000. The company owes money to several creditors, including Pollock ($50,634), Persedo ($19,270), and Parking Management ($5,927). Despite requests for comment, Devils River Distillery has not responded to inquiries about its current situation or future plans.

Founded in 2017 by Mike Cameron, Devils River Whiskey quickly gained attention for its bold branding and diverse portfolio. The distillery offers nine different whiskey expressions and distributes its products across 36 states and five countries through 375 Park Avenue Spirits. The brand’s rapid growth was fueled by a focus on high-quality bourbon and a distinctive image that appealed to both enthusiasts and casual consumers.

Industry sources indicate that several companies within the spirits sector have shown interest in acquiring the Devils River brand or some of its assets in Texas. The bankruptcy filing is seen as a strategic move to reorganize debt while exploring options such as asset sales or restructuring to potentially resume operations on a smaller scale.

The decision to seek bankruptcy protection is attributed to several factors affecting the broader craft spirits industry. Rising production costs, ongoing supply chain challenges following the pandemic, a slowdown in premium alcohol consumption, and intense competition among craft distilleries have all contributed to financial pressures on Devils River Distillery. These challenges are not unique to Devils River; last month, Oregon-based Westward Whiskey also filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy under Subchapter V due to liquidity issues.

Subchapter V is designed specifically for small businesses, allowing them to expedite bankruptcy proceedings while retaining control over their operations and negotiating reorganization plans with increased oversight. This approach can provide struggling companies with an opportunity to stabilize their finances without immediately liquidating assets.

Mike Cameron, who also serves as president of the Texas Distilled Spirits Association and previously founded Rebecca Creek Distillery in San Antonio in 2007, remains an influential figure in the state's spirits industry. He is currently part of the Distilled Spirits Council of the US' Craft Advisory Council for 2025-2026.

Recent studies highlight the significance of Texas's distilling industry. In 2022, Texas distilleries generated an economic impact of $831.7 million and attracted more than two million visitors, with non-local visitors spending nearly $460 million at these facilities. The industry supported approximately 7,700 jobs statewide. According to the 2024 Craft Spirits Data Project, Texas ranks as the fourth largest state for craft producers with 177 distilleries—an increase from 163 the previous year.

As Devils River Distillery navigates bankruptcy proceedings, its future remains uncertain. The company's next steps will depend on negotiations with creditors and potential buyers interested in its brand or facilities. The outcome will be closely watched by industry observers as it may signal broader trends affecting craft spirits producers across Texas and beyond.