



July 2, 2014

The Honorable Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information Administration
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

**SUBJECT: PASO ROBLES WINE COUNTRY ALLIANCE REQUEST FOR
PERMANENT WITHDRAWAL OF .WINE AND .VIN gTLDs**

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance is the trade association representing the interests of the Paso Robles, California wine industry. The Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance represents more than 200 wineries and winegrape growers in the Paso Robles AVA, one of the fastest growing wine regions in California with an economic impact of \$1.5 billion per year to the local community.

In the wine industry, the integrity of wine place names and labeling is a fundamental tool for consumers to identify the wines of great winegrowing regions such as Paso Robles. Our specific location plays a role in the quality and unique nature of the wines we produce and cannot be replicated anywhere else in the world. For that reason, the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance and our member companies spend a lot of time and money educating consumers about the importance of these names and defending these terms against misuse.

To that end, we are very concerned about the real world implications of the proposal to add .wine and .vin generic Top Level Domains (gTLDs) now in front of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). The addition of these gTLDs and the lack of willingness to provide sufficient protection to mitigate against possible abuses against well-known wine regions such as ours and the brands of our members is opposed by the Paso Robles Wine Region as it is a grave threat to the sanctity of our names, increases consumer confusion and will significantly increase our cost of doing business.

We urge you to advocate to ICANN that .wine and .vin be permanently withdrawn.



1. The extension is unnecessary and will increase the cost of doing business for hundreds of small and medium sized businesses in our region. At the present time, we are already spending time and money to protect our names in the general online space. The addition of .wine and .vin will significantly increase that burden and undermine the efforts our region and member brands have made to date.
2. This is not the proper venue for a debate about geographic indications. The discussion of the .vin and .wine extensions has made it clear that ICANN is not prepared to discuss these issues and, as such, this should not be the forum for this debate.

Recently, NTIA Senior Policy Advisor Suzanne Radell mistakenly said three U.S. wineries oppose the .wine and .vin gTLDs. That statement is blatantly false and demonstrates the NTIA's lack of understanding of the domestic wine industry and its needs and concerns.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and consideration of this important request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Porter
Executive Director

cc:
Senator Barbara Boxer
Senator Dianne Feinstein
Congresswoman Lois Capps



July 2, 2014

The Honorable Lawrence Strickling
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information Administration
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

**SUBJECT: WALLA WALLA VALLEY WINE ALLIANCE REQUEST FOR
PERMANENT WITHDRAWAL OF .WINE AND .VIN gTLDs**

Dear Assistant Secretary Strickling:

The Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance is the trade association representing the interests of the Walla Walla Valley wine industry. The Valley's wine industry now has over 120 producing wineries and over 40 wine grape growers that contribute over \$500 million annually to Walla Walla County's economy.

In the wine industry, the integrity of wine place names and labeling is a fundamental tool for consumers to identify the wines of great winegrowing regions such as the Walla Walla Valley. Our specific location plays a role in the quality and unique nature of the wines we produce and cannot be replicated anywhere else in the world. For that reasons, the Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance and our member companies spend a lot of time and money educating consumers about the importance of these names and defending these terms against misuse.

To that end, we are very concerned about the real world implications of the proposal to add .wine and .vin generic Top Level Domains (gTLDs) now in front of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). The addition of these gTLDs and the lack of willingness to provide sufficient protection to mitigate against possible abuses against well-known wine regions such as ours and the brands of our members is opposed by our Wine Alliance as it is a grave threat to the sanctity of our names, increases consumer confusion and will significantly increase our cost of doing business.

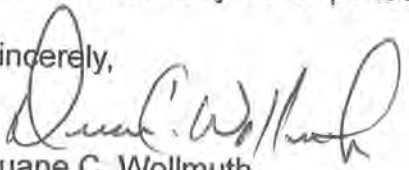
We urge you to advocate to ICANN that .wine and .vin be permanently withdrawn.

1. The extension is unnecessary and will increase the cost of doing business for hundreds of small and medium sized businesses in our region. At the present time, we are already spending time and money to protect our names in the

- general online space. The addition of .wine and .vin will significantly increase that burden and undermine the efforts our region and member brands have made to date.
2. This is not the proper venue for a debate about geographic indications. The discussion of the .vin and .wine extensions has made it clear that ICANN is not prepared to discuss these issues and, as such, this should not be the forum for this debate.

Recently, NTIA Senior Policy Advisor Suzanne Radell mistakenly said three U.S. wineries oppose the .wine and .vin gTLDs. That statement is blatantly false and demonstrates the NTIA's lack of understanding of the domestic wine industry and its needs and concerns.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and consideration of this important request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Duane C. Wollmuth
Executive Director
Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance

Copy: Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell
Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers