

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

IN THE MATTER OF

Humacao Restaurant & Bar
775 Silver Ln. Ste. B12
East Hartford, CT 06118
Robert Carrasco, Permittee
Jumping Coqui Restaurant and Lounge, LLC, Backer
Permit No. LIR.21281

March 19, 2024

SUMMARY SUSPENSION ORDER

This premises operates under a restaurant liquor permit issued by the Department of Consumer Protection (“DCP”). It operates under the trade name “Humacao Restaurant & Bar,” and is also known by the name “Humacao.” The permit was issued by DCP on a provisional basis on December 12, 2023; a final permit was approved on February 27, 2024 and is set to expire on December 11, 2024.

We find that on March 16, 2024 Humacao was the scene of a fatal shooting that occurred inside the premise. A large crowd hindered emergency response efforts to the victim. This incident follows a trend of active police involvement at the location, all occurring in the three short months that this premise has held a liquor permit.

Specifically, in a letter to DCP dated March 18, 2024, East Hartford Police Chief Mack Hawkins states that at on March 16, 2024 at approximately 1:22 a.m., East Hartford patrol officers responded to Humacao on a report of a male suffering a gunshot wound to his chest. Chief Mack’s letter, along with a case/incident report written on the date of the incident, explains that responding officers observed several vehicles leaving the area at a high rate of speed. The first officer on the scene found the victim on the floor, but several people surrounded him and initially refused to allow him access to the victim. Responding emergency personally additionally observed a large crowd that created “significant challenges” to render medical aid to the victim. After police arrival, “[c]rowd aggression escalated quickly, creating chaos at the scene, making it challenging for emergency service to communicate effectively and maintain control.” The victim was ultimately pronounced dead at Saint Francis Hospital. The report notes that a shell casing was found at the premise near where the victim had been lying on the floor. The report additionally notes that the manager on duty advised his security detail earlier in the evening that ““Something was gonna go off”” between the victim and the suspects and that he “wanted his security to handle it.” Police were not called for assistance at that time.

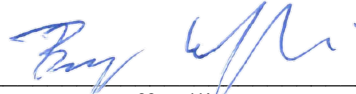
Chief Mack additionally notes that a search of East Hartford Police Department records for the past five years shows over 19 calls for service at or related to Humacao’s address. However, Chief Mack notes that 11 of those calls for service – more than half – have happened since January 1, 2024, which is only a two-and-a-half month time frame before the March 16th fatal shooting. More crucially, these calls for service began escalating less than one month after the current backer and permittee received the liquor permit.

As Chief Mack summarized: “The establishment poses an immediate danger to customers, neighbors, motorists, and responding police officers. The business persists in hosting unruly crowds, loud music, and intoxicated patrons despite repeated citizen complaints and response by the East Hartford Police Department. . . . The staff at Humacao Restaurant and Bar are aware of the complaints listed [herein], but such activity at this bar continues to persist, most recently resulting in the Homicide and melee of intoxicated patrons. . . .” Chief Mack’s statements and statistics demonstrate that routine enforcement deterrence have little apparent impact, as the scope and scale of violence has only increased over a short three-month period.

We find that the March 16, 2024 fatal shooting that, in conjunction with the increased police presence at the location since the issuance of the liquor permit, demonstrates that the premise is operated in a manner that imperils public safety and highlights the need for better control of the premise by the permittee, backer, or their agents.

Based upon the foregoing, DCP finds that public health, safety and welfare imperatively requires emergency action, in accordance with section 4-182 (c) of the Connecticut General Statutes, and **ORDERS** your restaurant liquor permit **suspended immediately** pending proceedings for revocation or other action.

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Bryan T. Cafferelli
Commissioner of Consumer Protection
Chairperson, Liquor Control Commission