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California Assembly Committee Delivers 2nd Punch to Powdered Alcohol, Passes AB 1554 to Ban the Product in the State



SACRAMENTO, CA (April 6, 2016) – Alcohol Justice and the California Alcohol Policy Alliance (CAPA) are reporting today that the second of two state bills to ban powdered alcohol in California has been passed by the Assembly Committee on Governmental Organization (GO). *“Kudos to Assemblymember Irwin and the members of the GO Committee for their leadership on this issue,”* stated Michael Scippa, Public Affairs Director for Alcohol Justice. *“We are hopeful that California will soon join the 30 other states which have already enacted precedent-setting, preemptory bans on this dangerous alcoholic product.”*

AB 1554, and an identical measure in the Senate (SB 819 - authored by Senator Bob Huff, R-Diamond Bar), will create a comprehensive pre-emptive stop to a chilling litany of health and safety concerns associated with powdered or crystalline alcohol. The bills will prohibit the possession, purchase, sale, offer for sale, distribution, manufacture, or use of powdered alcohol and would make the violation of these provisions punishable with a fine.

“When youth binge drinking and alcohol-related deaths are already at epidemic levels in California, the last thing we need is a product which is inherently easy to conceal, transport, and marketed as a way to make super-charged cocktails on the go,” said Assemblymember Irwin (D-Thousand Oaks). *“I am encouraged by today’s vote which puts us one step closer to keeping this product out of the hands of California’s youth.”*

An impressive group of public health and safety advocates from across the state came together to support her bill, including:

- Alcohol Justice
- Alcohol Policy Panel of San Diego County
- Association of California Healthcare Districts
- Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs
- California Alcohol Policy Alliance (CAPA)
- California Association of Code Enforcement Officers
- California College and University Police Chiefs Association
- California Council on Alcohol Problems
- California District Attorneys Association
- California Friday Night Live Partnership
- California Narcotic Officers Association

- Children’s Hospital Los Angeles
- Consumer Federation of California
- County Health Executives Association of California
- County Behavioral Health Directors Association – California (CBHDA)
- Contra Costa Board of Supervisors
- Eden Youth and Family Center
- El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
- Health Officers Association of California
- Institute for Public Strategies
- Los Angeles County Professional Peace Officers Association
- Los Angeles Drug and Alcohol Policy Alliance
- Los Angeles Police Protective League
- Marin County Board of Supervisors
- McGeorge Legislative & Public Policy Clinic
- Pacific Clinics
- Partnership for a Positive Pomona
- Placer County Board of Supervisors
- Pueblo y Salud, Inc.
- Riverside Sheriffs Association
- San Francisco Board of Supervisors
- Santa Barbara Fights Back Coalition
- Saving Lives Coalition
- Social Model Recovery Systems
- Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
- Techniques for Effective Alcohol Management (TEAM)
- Youth Leadership Institute
- Ventura County Board of Supervisors
- Ventura County Sheriff’s Department

Last March, Alcohol Justice requested emergency legislative action nationwide and in California in response to news that the U.S. Alcohol & Tobacco Tax & Trade Bureau (TTB) approved labels for the powdered alcohol product, *Palcohol*. The TTB approval gave a green light to begin marketing it wherever legal. Since then, 30 states have permanently banned powdered alcohol. Two states have enacted temporary one-year statutory bans, and three states are regulating it under existing alcohol statutes.

“Powdered Alcohol has a high potential to attract youth with its convenience, fruity flavors and portability,” stated Dr. Jim Kooler, spokesperson for California Alcohol Policy Alliance (CAPA), and Administrator of the California Friday Night Live Partnership and the California Center for Youth Development and Health Promotion. *“Young people who begin drinking before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence and are two and half times more likely to become abusers of alcohol than those who being drinking at age 21.”*

AB 1554 passed by unanimous vote with no opposition in the GO Committee and will now move through one more committee before being voted upon by the full Assembly. In the Senate, the Appropriations Committee will review SB 819, Senator Huff’s powdered alcohol ban bill, on Monday April 11. That bill passed through the Senate GO Committee on a unanimous vote early last month.

For more information: <http://alcoholpolicyalliance.org/>

To TAKE ACTION: <http://bit.ly/1x1qvbT>

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