

Governor Vetoes SB 905 (4 a.m. bar bill)

(Sept. 28, 2018, 3:30 p.m.) -- Governor Jerry Brown has vetoed SB 905, a bill that would have let bars and hotels serve alcohol until 4 a.m. in nine cities, including Long Beach, if approved by their respective City Councils.

In his veto message, Governor Brown wrote:

"Without question, these two extra hours will result in more drinking. The businesses and cities in support of this bill see that as a good source of revenue. The California Highway Patrol, however, strongly believes that this increased drinking will lead to more drunk driving. California's laws regulating late night drinking have been on the books since 1913. I believe we have enough mischief from midnight to 2 without adding two more hours of mayhem."

Long Beach was among nine CA cities included in the bill's test ("pilot") of the 4 a.m. closing times as a result of Mayor Garcia have told the bill's author, state Senator Scott Wiener (D, SF) that Long Beach wanted to be included. As previously reported by LBREPORT.com, a November 2017 press release from SB 905 author Sen. Wiener quoted Mayor Garcia as saying: "This bill clearly would not work citywide for us [but] it does give the city and local law enforcement the flexibility to allow special events in the Downtown Entertainment District. This option has been supported by the Downtown Long Beach Business Alliance, which manages our business improvement district."

State Senator Ricardo Lara (D, LB-Huntington Park), the CA Dem Party's endorsed candidate for Insurance Commissioner in November, joined as an early co-author of SB 905. In May 2018, the state Senate approved SB 905 on a 27-9-3 vote with Senator Lara voting "yes" and state Senator Janet Nguyen (R, SE LB-west OC) voting "no."

When the bill reached the Assembly, Assemblyman Patrick O'Donnell (D, LB) was one of only a few Dems to vote "no." (Its Assembly passage was a foregone conclusion with support from Speaker Anthony Rendon (D, NLB-Paramount.)

SB 905's local supporters included the Downtown Long Beach Alliance and the LB Area Chamber of Commerce.

Alcohol Justice (a non-profit industry watchdog group) was among SB 905's most consistent opponents, along with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD California).

In late-May/early June Councilwoman Suzie Price stated her opposition to SB 905 in newsletter communications with her constituents, writing in part:

"I oppose allowing expanded hours of alcohol sales in Long Beach. Providing more time and access to alcohol presents increased concerns and opportunities for impaired driving, and creates an increased likelihood that people leaving bars are on the road in the early morning hours the same time as commuters beginning their day. I have seen the terrible and tragic affects of too many DUI cases, and would be very concerned with the potential dangers to our many Long Beach communities."

The LB-impacting bill advanced through the legislative process without discussion by LB's policy-setting City Council including its "State Legislation Committee" (Councilmembers Austin, Gonzalez and Mungo for most of 2018, but with Mungo replaced by Councilman Richardson (in an August 2018 reshuffling of Council Committees by Mayor Garcia.)

Statewide listed supporters include: [via State Senate Committee on Governmental Organization March 2018 legislative analysis/most complete supporter list]:

213 Hospitality California Hotel & Lodging Association California Music & Culture Association California Restaurant Association California Small Business Association California Teamsters Public Affairs Council California Travel Association Central City Association City of Oakland City of West Hollywood Darrell Steinberg, Mayor of Sacramento Greater Los Angeles Hospitality Association Hotel Council of San Francisco Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce Lyft Mark E. Farrell, Mayor of San Francisco Robert Garcia, Mayor of Long Beach San Francisco Bar Owner Alliance San Francisco Chamber of Commerce San Francisco Travel Association San Francisco Taxi Workers Alliance State Coalition of Probation Organization UBER UNITE HERE, AFL-CIO Valley Industry and Commerce Association West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce

Listed opponents include (Assembly Governmental Organization Committee legislative analysis list/June 2018):

Alameda County Board of Supervisors Alcohol & Drug Abuse Prevention Team San Ramon Valley Alcohol Justice Asian American Drug Abuse Program Barbary Coast Neighborhood Association California Alcohol Policy Alliance California Council on Alcohol Problems California Youth Council Californians for Drug Free Youth Center for Human Development Center for Open Recovery Cesar E. Chavez Commemorative Committee of the San Fernando Valley Coalition to Prevent Alcohol Related Harms LA Metro Coastal Communities Drug-Free Coalition Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse County Behavioral Health Directors Association Day One Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Network of Southern California Friday Night Live Program Health Officers Association of California Institute for Public Strategies Los Angeles Drug & Alcohol Policy Alliance Los Angeles Police Protective League Lutheran Office of Public Policy - California Mission Neighborhood Centers, Inc. Mothers Against Drunk Driving Mountain Communities Coalition Against Substance Abuse Mountain Communities Family Resource Center National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse, Inc. National Coalition Against Prescription Drug Abuse National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence - Orange County Pacoima Urban Village Project Safer Pueblo Y Salud, Inc. San Diegans for Safe Communities San Marcos Prevention Coalition Sonoma County Board of Supervisors South Orange County Coalition Sun Street Centers Tarzana Treatment Centers Teen Esteem The Wall-Las Memorias Project Wellness & Prevention Center West County Alcohol Marijuana & Prescription Drug Coalition West Hollywood Project Westside Impact Project Youth Leadership Institute