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California Senate Urged to Vote NO on Dangerous 4 a.m. Bar Bill Experiment at Intuit Dome in Inglewood

AB 3206 Places Billionaire Steve Ballmer’s Profits Over Public Health & Safety

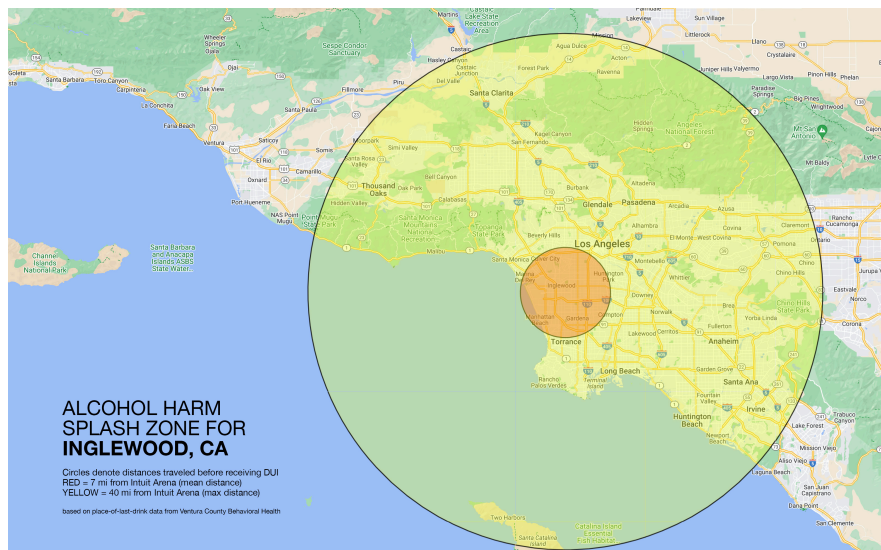
SAN RAFAEL, CA (August 9, 2024) – [Alcohol Justice](#) and the [California Alcohol Policy Alliance \(CAPA\)](#) are calling upon the California State Senate to stop a dangerous “district” bill that will punch a hole in the protections of uniform last call and expose the entire Los Angeles area to great risk.

If passed, California [AB 3206](#), introduced by [Assemblymember Tina McKinnor](#) (D-Inglewood), would allow the VIP lounge at the new [Intuit Dome Arena](#) to keep selling alcohol long after a Clipper’s basketball game or other event has ended – and long after the legal closing time of any other bar.

“It’s just absurd to think that the success of billionaire Steve Ballmer’s \$2 billion dollar investment in the L.A. Clippers and the Intuit Dome hinges on the ability to keep selling alcohol until 4 a.m.,” stated Cruz Avila, Executive Director of Alcohol Justice. *“Years of peer-reviewed research has proven that maintaining existing last call times is a key policy for reducing the harms from reckless drinking and from alcohol-related motor crashes. Extending to 4 a.m. is a fatal step in the wrong direction.”*

Even one more hour of alcohol sales in just this one venue will disrupt the protections of California’s uniform, statewide 2 a.m. last call. It will expose surrounding communities—in fact the entire L.A. basin—to increased harms and costs while only the alcohol sellers in the epicenter of Ballmer’s dome see the marginal economic benefits.

In 2018, the evidence for increased harms was presented to the legislature in an Alcohol Justice/CAPA report entitled [The Late Night Threat, Science, Harms, and Costs of Extending Bar Service Hours](#). It highlighted the existing data supporting how the acute effects of extending alcohol sales would spread to “Splash Zones” surrounding various cities in California.



More recently, another analysis was released by the respected Oakland-based [Alcohol Resource Group \(ARG\)](#), a project of the Public Health Institute. [“The High Cost of the 4 A.M. Bar Bill”](#) was a first of its kind cost-benefit analysis detailing the effects of changing state alcohol policy to allow later last call at bars, restaurants, and clubs. The analysis disturbingly documented the worst concerns of Alcohol Justice and CAPA that public health and safety would be severely compromised if California’s 2 a.m. last call fell.

“Since 2013, there have been six attempts to pass statewide extension of alcohol sales in bars and restaurants to 4 a.m, but California said NO to all of them because it’s a recognized, dangerous policy change,” stated Raul Verdugo, Advocacy Director at Alcohol Justice. *“And now it’s time to say NO again, this time to a district bill that will benefit just one entity at the expense of the entire L.A. area. If the bill becomes law, a flood of similar district bills will demand the same privilege and soon every corner of the state will be experiencing increased early morning consumption, and ensuing costs for public health and safety harms.”*

There is considerable and widespread opposition to AB 3206 throughout the state and in the Legislature...

“Despite the narrow scope of this bill, it sets a dangerous precedent,” stated [Senator Kelly Seyarto](#) (R-Murrieta). *“Making an exception for one venue to allow operation into the early morning hours will add drunk drivers on the roads of Inglewood and the surrounding communities, at the time that early morning commuters are getting on the road. As a retired firefighter who worked in those very communities, I cannot support AB 3206.”*

“Driving under the influence kills. Enabling residents to drink into the early morning hours is dangerous, and public policy should never worsen an already deadly situation,” said [Assemblyman Tom Lackey](#) (R-Palmdale), a retired California Highway Patrol Sergeant who has witnessed tragic, unnecessary deaths.

Despite opposition within the Legislature, AB 3206 has advanced up to now, most recently by just one vote - in a key Senate Governmental Organization Committee hearing in June. It will soon be up for a full Senate floor vote. [Advocates are asking Senators to place public health and safety above Steve Ballmer’s bottom line and Vote NO on the bill.](#)

“Though the language of this bill seeks to collect an impact assessment report one year after implementation — as advocates for “communities” and the reduction of harm associated with alcohol, we firmly hold to the belief that one life lost is one life too many,” added Verdugo on behalf of the California Alcohol Policy Alliance (CAPA). *“Any effort to introduce alcohol legislation that exacerbates the life-threatening conditions impacting innocent lives — should never be considered advantageous to any city or county in our state, VIP status or not.”*

“This would be another capitulation to deregulation by California, at a time when alcohol-related deaths have continued spiraling year after year,” said Carson Benowitz-Fredericks, Research Director at Alcohol Justice. *“We think of our state as cutting edge, compassionate, intelligent. But we are losing our friends and neighbors to alcohol for the same reasons other localities saw horrific death tolls from COVID-19: a refusal to listen to the science, and a refusal to care about human lives.”*

FACTS

- AB 3206 will allow extending alcohol sales to 4 a.m. in the VIP lounge at Steve Ballmer’s Intuit Dome Arena where his L.A. Clippers will play.
- The risks of extended service times apply to VIPs the same as they do to anyone else, POSSIBLY MORE— consumption tends to increase with wealth. Rich people running into working-class people.
- These “VIP” areas are notoriously devoid of accountability and incentivized to cover up violence, sexual assault, and injury, much more so than bars open to the public
- Keeping consumption confined in a “VIP” area creates a space even more devoid of accountability than most late-night bars and clubs
- AB 3206 trades the public health and safety of the greater Los Angeles area for enhancing an Inglewood corporation’s profits
- AB 3206 will subsidize and reward nightlife alcohol-sellers at tax-payer expense
- AB 3206 concentrates profit while spreading risk, disruption and harm
- Aside from the risk of assault, accidental injury, and motor vehicle crashes, drinking until 4 a.m. creates conditions where exhaustion + alcohol becomes more deadly than either would be alone
- AB 3206 would create a slippery slope to strip away statewide uniform protections of 2 a.m. last call
- A later last call does not fill any need expressed by any reasonable adult, and granting this will make every major venue with a “VIP” room demand the same
- AB 3206 disregards 40 years of peer-reviewed, public health research on the dangers of extending last call
- AB 3206 would cost cities and towns in the Inglewood/L.A. “Splash Zones” millions in harm, disruption, and additional police and ambulance service

- Alcohol-related deaths are out of control in California, climbing 370% in only six years. (From 10,800 deaths annually in 2015 to 19,335 in 2021. Esser et al. 2020; Jiménez, Demeter & Pinsker 2023)
- Alcohol-related driving fatalities also continued to rise, from 966 in 2019 to 1370 in 2021. (California Office of Traffic Safety 2023)
- AB 3206 ignores \$35 billion in annual alcohol-related harm in California
- A 4 a.m. last call anywhere in Los Angeles is a threat to all of Los Angeles

“We keep forgetting that, when someone gets wasted and crashes their car, they often crash into someone else,” added Benowitz-Fredericks. *“AB 3206, like so many ill-conceived alcohol free-for-alls that are so popular in Sacramento, might make one extraordinarily wealthy person’s night a little more fun, earn one billionaire another couple thousand dollars. And the cost? The life of an innocent early-morning commuter who never asked for any of this, never benefitted from it, never voted for it, and leaves a family behind.”*

CAPA Member Organizations

- Alcohol Justice
- Alcohol-Narcotics Education Foundation of California
- ADAPP, Inc.
- ADAPT San Ramon Valley
- Bay Area Community Resources
- Behavioral Health Services, Inc.
- CA Council on Alcohol Problems
- CASA for Safe & Healthy Neighborhoods
- Center for Human Development
- Center for Open Recovery
- Eden Youth & Family Center
- Institute for Public Strategies
- FASD Network of Southern CA
- FreeMUNI – SF
- Friday Night Live Partnership
- Koreatown Youth & Community Center
- Laytonville Healthy Start
- L.A. County Friday Night Live
- L.A. Drug & Alcohol Policy Alliance
- L.A. County Office of Education
- Lutheran Office of Public Policy – CA
- MFI Recovery Center
- Mountain Communities Family Resource Center
- National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse
- Partnership for a Positive Pomona
- Paso por Paso, Inc.
- Project SAFER
- Pueblo y Salud
- Reach Out
- San Marcos Prevention Coalition
- San Rafael Alcohol & Drug Coalition
- SF DogPAC
- SAY San Diego
- Saving Lives Drug & Alcohol Coalition
- South Orange County Coalition
- Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc.
- The Wall Las Memorias Project
- UCEPP Social Model Recovery Systems
- Women Against Gun Violence
- Youth For Justice

Jeanne Shimatsu, Prevention Director at the [Asian American Drug Abuse Program](#) (AADAP) stated, *“Our organization has long partnered with the Inglewood community to provide treatment services, including educating, informing, and advocating a safer and healthier environment for youth and families. We want to emphasize that extended bar service hours are detrimental to Inglewood’s community wellness. A few drinks after 2 a.m. can cost more than material damage—it will cost lives.”*

TAKE ACTION to STOP AB 3206 <https://www.voterveice.net/AlcoholJustice/Campaigns/115851/Respond>

Or Text PUBLICSAFETY to 50457

For More Information go to: <https://alcoholjustice.org/projects/california-alcohol-policy-alliance/> or <https://alcoholjustice.org/>



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