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**Governor Newsom Puts Corporate Interests Over Public Health:
Alcohol Justice and California Alcohol Policy Alliance
Condemn Recent Legislative Decisions**

SAN RAFAEL, CA (October 14, 2024) — In the wake of the close of the 2023-2024 legislative session, [Alcohol Justice](#) and the [California Alcohol Policy Alliance \(CAPA\)](#) are calling out California Governor Gavin Newsom for his repeated failure to prioritize public health. Despite rising [alcohol-related deaths](#), which have increased by 20% since 2019, Governor Newsom continues to support legislation favoring corporate interests and Big Alcohol, ignoring the devastating impact on California communities.

“The legislature and the governor have once again dismissed our strong, evidence-based policy recommendations,” said Cruz Avila, Executive Director at Alcohol Justice. *“By passing these dangerous bills we know the state will suffer more alcohol-related harm. When will they get their priorities straight?”*

While vetoing 183 bills—18% of those on his desk—Governor Newsom did not veto a single alcohol-related bill. Among the most troubling bills passed are [SB 969](#) and [AB 3206](#), which strip away essential alcohol safety regulations:

- **SB 969**, introduced by Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), transforms bars into unregulated alcohol dispensaries, selling mixed drinks directly on the street without oversight. This bill paves the way for dangerous "party zones," with risks akin to the violence seen on Bourbon Street in New Orleans.
- **AB 3206**, sponsored by Assemblymember Tina McKinnor (D-Inglewood), extends the last call for alcohol sales at a VIP club in the Intuit Clippers basketball arena, serving the wealthy elite while endangering the safety of residents.

“Despite specific outcomes, Alcohol Justice and CAPA successfully intervened to alter the result of several harmful alcohol bills and participated significantly in wins for public health,” stated Raul Verdugo, Advocacy Director at Alcohol Justice. *“Upon request, CAPA testified in support of [Assemblymember Josh Lowenthal’s](#) three critically essential and progressive drink-spiking prevention bills, AB 2375, AB 2389, and AB 2402, which aim to address the underreported risk of drink adulteration and ensure better safety measures in bars and restaurants. Indeed — our aspirations align — when the opportunities we encounter support legislation prioritizing public health and advancing public safety.*

Alcohol Justice and CAPA’s 2023-2024 Legislative Scorecard

Every year, Alcohol Justice tracks alcohol-related legislation impacting public health, calculating a "prevention average" for priority bills, which is then compared to the Major League Baseball batting average leader:

Alcohol Justice Prevention Record:

- **Supported Bills Passed:** 3
- **Opposed Bills Defeated:** 8
- **Prevention Average:** 0.444

CAPA Prevention Record:

- **Supported Bills Passed:** 3
- **Opposed Bills Defeated:** 2
- **Prevention Average:** 0.710

For reference, the 2024 MLB batting average leader was Bobby Witt of the Kansas City Royals at 0.332.

Key Bills of Concern:

- [SB 969](#) – The “BSIMBY” Bill (Bourbon Street In My Backyard) allows bars to sell alcohol directly on the streets, turning California cities into uncontrolled "party zones" without sufficient public safety measures.
- [AB 3206](#) – The “Late Last Calls for the Wealthy” bill extends last call times for VIP patrons at a Clippers stadium, potentially increasing drunk driving risks for Inglewood residents.
- [AB 2375](#), [AB 2389](#), and [AB 2402](#) – The “Spikeproofing Bars” bills, supported by CAPA, strengthen efforts to prevent drink spiking and ensure customer safety in licensed alcohol establishments.
- [AB 2094](#) – The “Get ‘Em While They’re Young” bill expands Big Alcohol advertising on college campuses, exposing underage students to alcohol marketing.
- [AB 2589](#) – The “Smashed Fashion” bill irresponsibly allows for more alcohol licenses in overconcentrated areas, specifically targeting shopping malls, risking public safety in suburban neighborhoods.

Moving Forward: Community Involvement and Advocacy

As the first dangerous party zones set to open in San Francisco later this year, Alcohol Justice and CAPA are preparing resources to support local advocates in fighting these reckless expansions. The fight for public health continues, and we urge communities across California to join us in demanding responsible alcohol policies that prioritize safety over profit.

"Most people don't know what Sacramento is doing to take down day-to-day protections against dangerous driving, to encourage local violence and crime, and to make Main Street hostile to any business that doesn't have a liquor license," said Carson Benowitz-Fredericks, Research Director at Alcohol Justice. "They don't know until those changes are dropped on them. It's more straightforward, not to mention more ethical, for lawmakers to simply keep existing protections. But when our leaders fail us, we mobilize locally to protect communities--and with party zones and late last calls, that's exactly what we'll need to do."

Read more...

2024 CA Legislative Summary: The Tide of Big Alcohol Keeps Rising, But Bars Get a Little Safer

<https://alcoholjustice.org/enews/2024-ca-alcohol-legislation-summary/>

For more information on how to get involved, please contact:

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California Alcohol Policy Alliance (CAPA)

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