

Hoosiers Provide Testimony to Indiana Lawmakers on Alcohol Issues

ABOUT EXPANDED SUNDAY SALES

Ms. Lisa Hutcheson, **Indiana Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking**, said that underage drinking is already a problem in Indiana that would be made worse by increasing the sales outlets for cold beer. She said that beer is the most widely consumed beverage for underage drinkers and the preferred drink of adult binge drinkers. Ms. Hutcheson reported that 35 percent of retail establishments failed the ATC's compliance checks.

Mr. Andrew Sprock, **Madison County Program Director, Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant**, said that approximately one in three students drink on a regular basis by the time they are in high school. Mr. Sprock reported that 49 percent of the compliance checks done by the ATC have resulted in the sale of alcohol to a minor. Mr. Sprock said that research shows that the portion of the brain dealing with risk taking develops before the portion of the brain dealing with judgment and second thought. Cold beer is a convenience item for an impulsive purchase.

Major Mark Bowen, **Hamilton County Sheriff's Department**, said that 17,000 people die each year in alcohol related crashes nationally and that intoxication is the number one crime of those incarcerated in the Hamilton County jail. He said that expanding cold beer sales is more convenient for people, which means that more people will drink and drive.

Ms. Nancy Beals, **Drug Free Marion County**, said that alcohol and substance abuse are costly due to the services needed to deal with the aftermath. She reported that in 2007, Indiana had 9,942 alcohol-related crashes, resulting in 232 deaths, 532 incapacitating injuries, 3,025 injuries and 6,153 incidents of property damage and in 2005, underage drinking cost \$1.3 billion in medical care, work loss, property damage, fetal alcohol syndrome, and treatment.

Ms. Mary Walker, **Marion County Alliance of Neighborhood Associations**, said that if other vendors want to sell cold beer, they should have to abide by the same constraints as package liquor stores including quotas, permit cost, separation of product, age and training of servers, limitations on the type and number of non-alcoholic products that can be sold.

Mr. Michael Osborne, **chaplain**, discussed his experiences in dealing with parents and families of teenagers who have died in traffic accidents. He said that package liquor stores, unlike grocery and drug stores, keep track of who is purchasing alcohol.

ABOUT DIRECT WINE SHIPMENTS

Mr. Randy Miller, **Drug Free Marion County**, said that if wine samplings are allowed in gourmet wine shops, the following safeguards should be in place: (1) these shops should meet all requirements for alcohol sales; (2) the shop should be accessible only to those 21 years of age or older; (3) samplings should be limited by amount and length of time; (4) staff should have training and licenses to serve; and (5) there should be licensing requirements for shops holding samplings.

ABOUT UNDERAGE DRINKING

Mr. Scott Allen, **Underage and Binge Drinking Prevention Initiative**, said that in 2006, there were 207 DUI arrests of juveniles in Marion County, constituting 6 percent of total arrests that year. He said that 50 percent of Marion County eighth graders admit to consuming alcohol, compared to a rate of 46 percent for the state and a rate of 70 percent on average by the time they reach high school age. Mr. Allen said that package liquor stores, unlike other dealers, track large quantity shipments.

Ms. Jerry Lerch, **Drug and Alcohol Consortium of Allen County**, said that her organization supports limits on casual purchases and expanded reporting on large alcohol purchases. Ms. Lerch provided the Committee with statistics on underage drinking, stating that: (1) half of the population that is 12 years of age and older used alcohol in the past month; (2) 20 percent of the population that is 12 years of age and older have binged on alcohol during the previous 30 day period; and (2) one-fourth of Indiana high school students rode with someone who was drinking.

Source: Final Report of the Interim Study Committee on Alcoholic Beverage Issues, October 2009 (Testimony verbatim from the Indiana Legislative Services Agency Report)