

National Alliance to Prevent Underage Drinking

November 15, 2016

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman
Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Energy and Commerce Committee
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Upton and Ranking Member Pallone:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to respectfully request that you support reauthorization of H.R. 1717, the Sober Truth on Preventing (STOP) Underage Drinking Act, and hold a markup of the bill in the Health Subcommittee as soon as possible.

We greatly appreciate the Committee's past support of national efforts to combat underage alcohol use and abuse and hope to continue to see strong support for the STOP Act in the 114th Congress. Congress passed the STOP Act in 2006 with unanimous bipartisan and bicameral support to address the public health crisis of underage drinking.

It is clear that, since its passage, the comprehensive approach of the STOP Act has been effective at reducing underage drinking: the most recent (2015) Monitoring the Future Survey found that lifetime alcohol use by 8th, 10th and 12th graders is at historic lows for all three grades. In fact, these levels are the lowest since each grade was included in the study (1975 for 12th graders and 1991 for 8th and 10th graders).

These results are being accelerated across the nation in communities with STOP Act grantees:

- In Newton, NJ, the Coalition for Healthy and Safe Families saw the percentage of 10th grade students reporting past 30-day use of alcohol decrease at a rate of 22%, from 30% in 2010 to 23.4% in 2012
- In New London, CT, the New London Community and Campus Coalition contributed to a 63.6% reduction in past 30-day use of alcohol among 8th graders, from 8.3% in 2010 to 3.0% in 2012, as well as a 51.6% reduction in past 30-day use of alcohol among high school students, from 30.4% in 2010 to 14.7% in 2012

Clearly, the STOP Act is needed now more than ever, and should be reauthorized in the 114th Congress. H.R. 1717, the STOP Act reauthorization, maintains and enhances the four areas of policy development contained in the original STOP Act and adds one additional area, screening and brief intervention in pediatric care settings. It does all this while staying within the existing overall authorized level of \$18 million.

The STOP Act Reauthorization includes the following existing authorizations:

Community-Based Programs to Prevent Underage Drinking

- *Community Based Coalition Enhancement Grants* (\$6 million for each of fiscal years 2016-2020) for current and former Drug-Free Communities (DFC) grantees contained in the original STOP Act
- *Grants For Partnerships Between Community Coalitions and Institutions of Higher Education* (\$2.5 million for each of fiscal years 2016-2020), which provide grants to current and former DFC grantees to partner with institutions of higher education to prevent and reduce the rate of underage alcohol consumption, including binge drinking among students at institutions of higher education (note: this modifies the existing authorization by changing eligible applicants from a state, institution of higher education or non-profit entity to DFC coalitions and cutting the funding level from \$5 million to \$2.5 million)

Interagency Coordinating Committee and Annual State Report

- *Interagency Coordinating Committee; Annual Report On State Underage Drinking Prevention And Enforcement Activities* (\$1 million for each fiscal years 2016-2020) - Reauthorizes the Interagency Coordinating Committee to Prevent Underage Drinking (ICCPUD) to coordinate the efforts and expertise of various Federal agencies to combat underage drinking, and reauthorizes the annual report to Congress on State efforts to combat underage drinking.

National Media Campaign

- *National Media Campaign to Prevent Underage Drinking* (\$1 million for each of fiscal years 2016-2017 and such sums as necessary for fiscal years 2018-2020) – Reauthorizes a highly visible adult-oriented media campaign which educates the public about the public health and safety benefits of evidence-based policies to reduce underage drinking and builds public and parental cooperation and support for such policies.

Reducing Underage Drinking through Screening and Brief Intervention

- *Grants to Pediatric Health Care Providers to Reduce Underage Drinking* (\$3 million for each of fiscal years 2016-2020), which provides grants to assist pediatric provider organizations in educating pediatric health care providers on best practices for screening adolescents for alcohol use, offering brief interventions to discourage drinking, referring to other care when needed, and working with parents.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- *Additional Research on Underage Drinking* (\$4.5 million for each of fiscal years 2016-2020) – Provides for expansion of research capabilities for Excessive Alcohol Use which will allow for collecting surveillance data on underage drinking at federal and state levels, working to monitor and report on youth exposure to alcohol advertising, and better dissemination of effective strategies to reduce underage drinking to states, communities, and the general public.

The investment called for by the STOP Act Reauthorization is a proven, cost-effective, evidence-based strategy to reduce the \$24 billion toll that results from underage drinking. H.R. 1717 has immense bipartisan support in the House, and needs to be reauthorized. We urge you to hold a markup of the bill as soon as possible, so lives can be saved.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this important request.

Sincerely,

Alcohol Justice
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Society of Addiction Medicine
California Consortium of Addiction Programs & Professionals
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
Drug Free America Foundation, Inc.
Illinois Alcohol and Drug Dependence Association
International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium
Mothers Against Drunk Driving
NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals
National Alcohol Beverage Control Association
National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse
National Association for Children of Alcoholics
National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors
National Beer Wholesalers Association
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.
National Liquor Law Enforcement Association
National Safety Council
The National Council for Behavioral Health
The Partnership for Drug-Free Kids
Treatment Communities of America
U.S. Alcohol Policy Alliance
Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America