



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: May 6, 2003

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: ADOPTING A SOCIAL HOST ORDINANCE IN THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO (District: All)

SUMMARY:

Overview

Consumption of alcoholic beverages by minors in public and private locations presents a myriad of problems for the minor, the community, and law enforcement. Even worse, some adults not only condone this behavior but they supply alcohol to minors at a party in their own home.

While many believe that underage drinking is a "rite of passage" or that teenagers can easily recover from the effects of alcohol because their bodies are more resilient, exactly the opposite is true. Young people who begin drinking alcohol before age 15 are four times more likely to become dependent on alcohol than those who wait until age 21.

For minors, alcohol abuse can lead to traffic crashes, violent crime, accidental injury, alcohol poisoning and increased risk-taking behaviors. For the community and law enforcement, the effects can result in the loss of lives, including friends and family, and increased law enforcement costs. When a house party gets out of hand and disturbs the neighborhood, the Sheriff's Department responds to the disturbance, often having to use extensive resources to manage the incident. Further, a large social gathering that requires law enforcement attention takes away valuable resources from other service calls in a community.

Today's action directs the Chief Administrative Officer to draft a social host ordinance that would hold parents and adults of legal drinking age responsible for providing alcohol to minors at a house party and return to the Board of Supervisors within 45 days for further consideration.

Recommendation(s)

VICE CHAIRWOMAN JACOB AND CHAIRMAN COX:

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Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to draft a social host ordinance and return to the Board within 45 days.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this request.

BACKGROUND:

Consumption of alcoholic beverages by minors in public and private locations presents a myriad of problems for the minor, the community, and law enforcement. Even worse, some adults not only condone this behavior but they supply alcohol to minors at a party in their own home. Adults may feel that they are acting in the community's best interest when they provide alcohol to minors in the setting of their own home, but negative unintended consequences are often the result. Young people who begin drinking alcohol before age 15 are four times more likely to become dependent on alcohol than those who wait until age 21.

For minors, alcohol abuse can lead to traffic crashes, violent crime, accidental injury, alcohol poisoning and increased risk-taking behaviors. Alcohol is the number one choice of drugs for minors due to its accessibility. According to a 2001 survey of Mountain Empire High School Students, 62 percent of male students in the 11th grade and 80 percent of males students in the 12th grade as well as 66 percent of female students in the 11th grade and 60 percent of female students in the 12th grade said that they obtain alcohol from home or at home parties. Furthermore, according to the 2002 Health and Well-Being Report Card, the rate of children and youth between the ages of 15 and 20 that are killed or injured in alcohol/drug related motor vehicle crashes is on the rise. In another study it was determined that underage drinking primarily occurs in homes and in open spaces such as parks and beaches.

For the community and law enforcement, the effects of underage drinking can result in the loss of lives, including friends and family, and increased law enforcement costs. When a house party gets out of hand and disturbs the neighborhood, the Sheriff's Department responds to the disturbance, often having to use extensive resources to manage the incident. Further, a large social gathering that requires law enforcement attention takes away valuable resources from other service calls in a community. Currently, the Sheriff's Department receives no reimbursement for their expenses when called to a house party.

Recently, the cities of San Diego, Poway and Oceanside have passed similar ordinances. Punishment for violating the County ordinance should be a misdemeanor charge, a \$1,000 fine and/or six months jail time and the County should seek full cost recovery for the Sheriff's Department from the parents that hosted a party where alcohol was provided to minors. In addition, revenues received by the County due to this ordinance should be directed toward alcohol abuse and prevention education programs in the community.

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Today's action directs the Chief Administrative Officer to work with County Counsel and appropriate County departments to draft a social host ordinance for consideration by the Board of Supervisors within 45 days.

We urge your support!

Respectfully submitted,

DIANNE JACOB
Vice Chairwoman

GREG COX
Chairman

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

CONCURRENCE(S)

COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Written Disclosure per County Charter Section 1000.1 Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
 GROUP/AGENCY FINANCE DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Requires Four Votes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
 GROUP/AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
 COUNTY TECHNOLOGY OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
 DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

Other Concurrence(s): [Click here and type, or type N/A if not applicable]

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: [Click here & type]

CONTACT PERSON(S):

Alan Pentico

Name

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E-mail

Patty Danon

Name

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E-mail

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: _____

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET
(continued)

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

CONTRACT NUMBER(S):

SUBJECT: ADOPTING A SOCIAL HOST ORDINANCE IN THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO (District: All)

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DEPARTMENT:
PROGRAM:
PROPOSAL:

	(a)	(b)	(c)	FUTURE YEARS ESTIMATED BUDGET OF PROPOSAL IF ADOPTED	
	Budgeted Amount For Proposal	Proposed Change in Budgeted Amount	Proposed Revised Current Year Budget (a+b)	(d) 1st Subsequent Year	(e) 2nd Subsequent Year
Direct Cost					
Revenue/Other Offset					
NET GENERAL FUND COST					
Staff Years					

Sources of Revenue/Other Offset for Proposed Change and Subsequent Years:

Space-Related Impacts: Will this proposal result in any additional space requirements? Yes N/A

Support/Other Departmental Impacts: Yes N/A

Remarks: Yes N/A