

## Wiener reintroduces bill to extend California nightlife

By [Trisha Thadani](#)

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Photo: Liz Hafalia / The Chronicle

From left, ex- Sen. Mark Leno, Sen. Scott Wiener, Oasis host Heklina and bar co-owner Honey Mahogany speak about bill.

State Sen. Scott Wiener, D-San Francisco, is making another effort to extend California's nightlife past the current 2 a.m. cutoff.

On Tuesday, he announced plans for a new version of a bill that would allow bars to stay open until 4 a.m. The move comes a few months after the Assembly Appropriations Committee [replaced](#) a previous version of the bill — known as the Let Our Communities Adjust Late-night, or Local Act — with a task force to study the implications of allowing bars to stay open later.

The proposal would allow communities to decide whether certain bars can stay open past the current 2 a.m. cutoff. In the new version, the extension would only be granted to six cities whose mayors have supported the effort — San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, Sacramento, West Hollywood and Long Beach — rather than the entire state.

This will be at least the fourth time that a state senator has tried to pass a bill that attempts to extend the state's nightlife hours. Wiener's last version of the bill [made it further](#) through the Legislature than any previous versions by former Sen. Mark Leno, D-San Francisco.

At a Tuesday news conference at San Francisco Eagle — a bar that would take advantage of the extension — Wiener said he hopes the limited version of this bill will finally make it to the governor's desk.

“People have a perception that nightlife is just about fun,” he said. “But it's also about the culture of our community. ... People wonder why they are in a major metro area but can't find alcohol after 2 a.m.”

The effort to allow certain bars to stay open past 2 a.m. has widespread support from many in the restaurant and bar industry, who argue that the few extra hours would stimulate the state's economy.

Honey Mahogany, a drag performer and co-owner of Stud Bar, which has fallen on hard financial times, said being open later could double the bar's revenue. Mahogany said the bar makes most of its money between 11 p.m. and 1 a.m., Mahogany said.

“Having to close at peak hours really hurts us,” Mahogany said. “We rely on bar sales to pay rent.”

But critics — even some in the nightlife industry — say it puts revenue ahead of public safety.

“Can you imagine a bunch of drunk people out in front of your house at 4:30 in the morning?” Tim Sowards, a Bay Area resident who has been tending bar in San Francisco for 15 years, previously told The Chronicle. “It's already bad enough at 2:30.”

Bruce Lee Livingston, executive director and CEO of Alcohol Justice, a San Rafael nonprofit advocacy, research and policy organization, said the new version of the bill is not much better than the old one.

“It targets a good chunk of the population of California, so it is not really a targeted bill,” he said. “The bigger problem is that it is the same concept. Instead of controlling the overconsumption of alcohol, what it does is promote drinking.”

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