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California SB 58 Opponents Hold Los Angeles Press Event

Senator Wiener's "ZOMBIE" 4 a.m. bar bill will disrupt uniform last call and spread alcohol overconsumption, loss of life, injury, and nuisance across the state.

LOS ANGELES, CA (May 4, 2019) – [California Alcohol Policy Alliance \(CAPA\)](#), [Alcohol Justice](#), and Los Angeles City Councilmember [Paul Koretz](#) hosted a press event at Los Angeles City Hall yesterday to oppose SB 58, the third attempt by Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) to impose an irresponsible 4 a.m. bar closing time “pilot project” on California. Speakers representing groups and organizations throughout the state reported on the city and statewide public health and safety threats the bill would create by allowing a patchwork quilt of ten cities – including Los Angeles - to extend alcohol sales at bars, restaurants, and clubs to 4 a.m.

“Ever since Senator Wiener introduced his first of two failed attempts at a 4 a.m. bar bill in 2017, I have been saying that no one should ever prioritize a few hours of extra bar profits over public health and safety,” stated Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Koretz. *“The Senator is well-aware this bill will only benefit a small number of bar and nightclub owners. What he fails to acknowledge is that those minimal gains for his nightlife supporters will cost governments and taxpayers dearly for law enforcement and emergency medical services. If this bill should pass, there will be additional DUI-related deaths and injuries. As an elected official, our first priority should be to protect the lives of our constituents, so I call upon my colleagues in the State Legislature to do just that and vote NO on SB 58.”*

Council Member Koretz introduced a resolution (Council File: 19-002-S39) opposing SB 58 on March 5, 2019. There is growing support among the other L.A. City Council Members and a vote could come in June. In Sacramento, SB 58 is currently sitting in the “Suspense File” of the California Senate Appropriations Committee where a determination on the bill is expected by May 16, 2019. If passed, it would then face a Senate floor vote by May 31, 2019, before crossing over to the Assembly to continue the legislative process.

In 2017, Senator Wiener introduced SB 384, his first dangerous piece of legislation intending to strip away the protections of the state’s uniform, normal 2 a.m. closing time. It was turned into a study bill in the Assembly Committee on Appropriations and then gutted by the author and changed to a different topic.

In 2018, Senator Wiener introduced SB 905, which would have allowed nine cities to participate in a half-baked, so-called, “pilot project” to extend sales from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m. The legislature ignored the overwhelming evidence that 76% of the state’s population would be turned into unwitting “Splash Zone” lab rats suffering increased public health and safety harms. They passed the bill, but Governor Brown, heeding the advice of the CHP, wisely vetoed the bill with these words: *“I believe we have enough mischief from midnight to 2 without adding two more hours of mayhem.”*

Wiener’s SB 58, which is virtually identical to last year’s SB 905, continues to mock the scientific process of a true pilot project, as well as the proven public health and safety concerns of extending alcohol-trading hours in ten cities, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento, Oakland, Long Beach, West Hollywood, Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Coachella, and Fresno, as well as the Splash Zones surrounding them, will now be spared additional alcohol-fueled harm.

“SB 58’s author Senator Wiener claims that night life is critical to culture and economy. This belittles the great potential and abilities that exist in our communities apart from substance consumption,” stated Genesis Lopez, Co-Chair of the Coalition to Prevent Alcohol-Related Harms in LA Metro (COPALM). *“My concern with this bill is that low-income and underserved communities will be impacted the most. Families*

who are on constant survival mode and have limited literacy or luxury of time become targets for the expansion of nightlife. Nightlife is not meant or geared at "responsible decisions" and it perpetuates judgment impairment, human trafficking, and sex exploitation among many other issues. As a mother, I know that that is not the type of community I wish my children to be raised in. Today I stand in opposition of the 4 a.m. bill, not just for myself, but also for those who do not have a voice due to their immigration status, age, language barrier or any other hindrance. I am here for my community. Levanto mi voz por aquel que no puede, y urgo a los consejales que usen su poder para ser el bien."

At the core of the protest was the concern that if passed by the legislature SB 58 would probably be signed into law by Governor Newsom, whose alcohol-related businesses have made him a very wealthy man. The bill would then launch a dangerous five-year experiment that could expose over 76% of California's population to increased alcohol-related harm.

"MADD is extremely concerned that eliminating a statewide cutoff limit on the sale of alcohol will encourage "barhopping" – patrons driving from one city to the next looking for one last drink," Melissa Estelle, MPH, CHES, Senior Program Specialist, Legislative Liaison for Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Southern California. *"On behalf of the victims and survivors we serve, MADD urges lawmakers to reject SB 58 in its current form. Please consider not only the fiscal impact DUIs have on our communities, but also the lifelong consequences caused by one person's choice to drink, and then drive."*

California currently suffers over 10,500 alcohol-related deaths and \$37+ billion in costs annually. The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) has reported that fatal DUI is a chronic, worsening problem for the state. Between 2014 and 2016, alcohol-related crash deaths rose 21%. That number can only go up with two additional hours of alcohol consumption. Thus, the only benefit of selling alcohol between 2 and 4 a.m. will be greater profits to bar, restaurant, and club owners in the party zones the bill will create; while the public and all levels of government will be forced to continue to cover the costs of mitigating the harms that follow.

"We hope Senator Wiener and the rest of our state legislators hear us loudly, again, that CALIFORNIA COMMUNITIES DO NOT WANT A 4 A.M. LAST CALL," stated Brenda Villanueva, Co-Chair of the Los Angeles Alcohol and Drug Policy Alliance (CAPA). *"All the peer-reviewed science says that increases in hours of sale that are two hours or greater will lead to increases in excessive alcohol use and related problems. We are asking all of our legislators: Por favor, take a stand for public health over private profits and KILL THIS BILL."*

The data most often referred to and consistently ignored or dismissed by Senator Wiener & his late night supporters comes from a U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) task force led by Jonathan Fielding, M.D., M.P.H., M.A., M.B.A, Distinguished Professor UCLA Fielding School of Public Health and UCLA Geffen School of Medicine. The U.S. Community Preventive Services Task Force found in a peer-reviewed, global meta-analysis that every 2-hour increase in last-call times results in greater vehicle crash injuries and E.R. admissions. (Hahn et al., 2010) Dr. Fielding stated, *"...I have no reason to believe that an increase in hours of sale anywhere in the U.S. would have different results."*

"I've been working on this project since 2014 when it started as No More Liquor Stores," said Miriam Castro, Promotora and activist with Madres Que Luchan. *"It's unfortunate that on every street there are places exposing our children, grandchildren and senior citizens to alcohol. We know it would be more negative to allow for a 4 a.m. last call. The community calls on our decision makers to take action. We are not invisible!"*

The peer-reviewed evidence for increased harms has been presented to the legislature and the Governor in a joint CAPA/Alcohol Justice report entitled, The Late Night Threat, Science, Harms, and Costs of Extending Bar Service Hours. It highlights the existing data supporting how the acute effects of extending alcohol sales would spread to "Splash Zones" surrounding the ten cities in Wiener's poorly constructed "pilot project."

"SB 58 fails to address who will pay for the alcohol-related harms that this bill will cost," said Veronica De Lara, co-chair of the California Alcohol Policy Alliance. *"The bill will endanger all the lives of the commuters that will be going to work in the early hours."*

"At Alcohol Justice we promote evidence-based public health policies and organize campaigns with diverse communities and youth against the alcohol industry's harmful practices," stated Sonny Skyhawk, actor, producer, activist, proud citizen of the Rosebud Sioux Tribal Nation, and Alcohol Justice Board Member. *"SB 58's has been mischaracterized as a 'local control' measure. But local control in alcohol policy is challenging at best and non-existent when it comes to this bill. The harm from one city's decision*

to change last-call times will “[splash](#)” over to every surrounding community. SB 58 will spread alcohol overconsumption, loss of life, injury, and nuisance across the state. We cannot allow that to happen.”

CAPA Member Organizations

- Alcohol Justice
- Alcohol-Narcotics Education Foundation of California
- ADAPP, Inc.
- ADAPT San Ramon Valley
- Bay Area Community Resources
- Behavioral Health Services, Inc.
- CA Council on Alcohol Problems
- CASA for Safe & Healthy Neighborhoods
- Center for Human Development
- Center for Open Recovery
- DogPAC of San Francisco
- Dolores Huerta Foundation
- Eden Youth & Family Center
- Institute for Public Strategies
- FASD Network of Southern CA
- FreeMUNI – SF
- Friday Night Live Partnership
- Koreatown Youth & Community Center
- Laytonville Healthy Start
- L.A. County Friday Night Live
- L.A. Drug & Alcohol Policy Alliance
- L.A. County Office of Education
- Lutheran Office of Public Policy – CA
- MFI Recovery Center
- Mountain Communities Family Resource Center
- National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse
- National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence – Orange County
- Partnership for a Positive Pomona
- Paso por Paso, Inc.
- Project SAFER
- Pueblo y Salud
- Reach Out
- San Marcos Prevention Coalition
- San Rafael Alcohol & Drug Coalition
- SAY San Diego
- Saving Lives Drug & Alcohol Coalition
- South Orange County Coalition
- Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc.
- The Wall Las Memorias Project
- UCEPP Social Model Recovery Systems

- Women Against Gun Violence
- Youth For Justice **TAKE ACTION** to **STOP SB 58**: <https://bit.ly/2vuTUxF> or Text Justice to 313 131



READ MORE:

<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-koretz-4am-bar-bill-20190426-story.html>

<https://dailybruin.com/2019/04/18/risk-of-alcohol-related-incidents-outweighs-potential-benefits-of-proposed-bill/>

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