



**MEDIA ADVISORY**  
for events occurring August 26,2020

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## ***COVID-19 Alcohol Deregulation Should Not Become the New Normal***

### ***Public Health Not Public Drinking Press Briefing***

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (August 25, 2020) – Health and community advocates from around the country are holding a virtual press event Wednesday, August 26, 2020, to send strong messages to the nation’s Governors that #COVID19 alcohol deregulations are dangerous, place alcohol industry profits above public health and safety, and must not become the new normal.

**What:** Virtual Press Event with 2<sup>nd</sup> channel simultaneous Spanish translation

**When:** Wednesday August 26, 2020, 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. (PT)

**Where:** Zoom Call – [media only, pre-registration required](#)  
Streaming live to the general public on [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) and [Twitter](#)

**Who:**

- **Bruce Lee Livingston, MPP**, Executive Director / CEO [Alcohol Justice](#), event Emcee (CA)
- **Jason Wilson, MD, MA, FACEP**, [Medical Director](#), ED Clinical Decision Unit, Associate Medical Director of Adult ED, TEAM Health, Research Director, Division of Emergency Medicine, Affiliate Associate Professor, Dept. of Internal Medicine, Morsani College of Medicine, Courtesy Faculty, Dept. of Anthropology, University of South Florida (FL)
- **J.P. Dorval**, Advocacy and Public Policy Liaison at [Prevention Action Alliance](#) (OH)
- **Linda Bosma, PhD**, [Bosma Consulting, LLC](#) (MN)
- **Thomas Greenfield**, Center Director, [Alcohol Research Group](#) (ARG), Board Member, Alcohol Justice (CA)
- **Gilbert Mora**, Co-Chair, [California Alcohol Policy Alliance](#) (CAPA) (CA)
- **Don Zeigler, PhD**, [Former Director Prevention & Health Promotion, American Medical Association](#), Adjunct Associate Professor, School of Public Health, University of Illinois at Chicago (IL)
- **Jeff Hanley**, Executive Director, [Commonwealth Prevention Alliance](#) (PA)
- **Will Jones**, Special Assistant for Communications and Outreach, [Smart Approaches to Marijuana](#) (SAM, Inc.), Washington, (DC)
- **Barry Schmidt**, Co-Chair, [Michigan Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking](#) and Project Director with the [Neighborhood Resource Center of Bay County](#) (MI)

**Why:** As the Coronavirus continues to rage across the United States, alcohol-related health problems are also on the rise. Alcohol consumption has increased dramatically under COVID as deregulation has made it easier than ever to purchase. This indicates a serious failure by many state Governors and top state agencies to acknowledge and address public health and safety concerns by often declaring alcohol sales “essential” during the pandemic. The catastrophic [annual alcohol-related harms](#) that already plague the country have for the most part been dismissed along with the rise in those harms being experienced now that alcohol was deemed essential.

In many states, public health and safety have taken a back seat to “economic recovery”, and the drivers of this dangerous alcohol deregulation are GUI - Government Under the Influence. Since the beginning of the pandemic shutdown, under the dubious guise of economic relief, states have deregulated and relaxed enforcement to help alcohol licensed establishments continue to operate. These dangerous, revenue-driven policy changes have promoted increased alcohol sales and consumption during the stay-at-home orders. They include allowing home deliveries with ineffective age verification, cocktails-to-go, expanding sales into public spaces, and the normalization of drinking during a public health emergency of massive proportions.

The participants in this virtual press briefing will discuss the negative impacts of COVID-19 alcohol deregulation in their states and some of the harms associated with increased alcohol consumption: impaired judgement, financial difficulties, increasing domestic violence, increasing vulnerability to Coronavirus by weakening the immune system, and the general negative effects on mental health.

This event launches a national **CALL to ACTION** to give constituents of all states a channel to send messages to their Governors asking them to closely re-examine their state’s relationship with alcohol, acknowledge that excessive alcohol use is No. 3 on the list of preventable causes of death, and insure that alcohol deregulation is not the new normal by ending COVID-19 regulatory rollbacks for economic relief as soon as possible. ***It’s time to make public health essential, not public drinking.***

***Please submit questions for speakers ahead of time to [michaels@alcoholjustice.org](mailto:michaels@alcoholjustice.org)***

JOIN US!

LIVE VIRTUAL PRESS BRIEFING ON  
WEDNESDAY 8/26 AT 10 A.M. (PT)

“COVID-19 ALCOHOL DERGULATION  
IS NOT THE NEW NORMAL”

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#PUBLICHEALTHNOTPUBLICDRINKING

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