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Senator Alex Padilla Takes Alcohol Ads on Public Property From Bad to Worse with SB 31

Community Activists Ask California Governor Jerry Brown to Stand Up for Public Health and Safety and Veto the Bill

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (September 12, 2013) – Alcohol Justice and community activists throughout California believe Senator Alex Padilla has done the unthinkable with his bill SB 31. *“He has taken away state control over alcohol ad content at sporting arenas located on public property in California,”* stated Jorge Castillo, Advocacy Director at Alcohol Justice. *“He has given that control to alcohol companies and advertising agencies.”* Alcohol Justice does not find the move surprising. In a [2010 Lobbying Report](#) they recognized Senator Padilla as one of the top 5 California state legislators receiving the most Big Alcohol money.

To the dismay of government officials and public health activists, Senator Padilla took SB 31 from bad to worse when he amended it to allow not only beer and wine ads on public property at sporting arenas, but distilled spirits ads as well. This addition came after the Los Angeles Coalition to Ban Alcohol Ads on Public Property in Los Angeles, a grassroots group working to limit alcohol ads on public property, contacted Senator Padilla's office and asked him to control ad content. **Activists are now asking public health advocates throughout California to TAKE ACTION and tell the Governor to veto the bill.**

“Senator Padilla’s bill will result in alcohol companies such as Anheuser- Busch InBev, whose Budweiser production plant is located in his district, to muscle their ads onto large billboards that will over-expose youth to seductive messages to drink,” added Castillo. *“But that’s only if the Governor allows this dangerous bill to become law.”*

Currently, alcohol advertising on public property at sporting arenas in California is specifically prohibited by AB 2339 (Solorio). *“Padilla’s booze ad bill opens the door to forests of bright, flashing billboards and other advertising signs along freeways and highways in the vicinity of sports arenas and stadiums, such as the proposed Farmers Field in downtown Los Angeles,”* stated Dennis Hathaway, President of the Coalition to Ban Billboard Blight. *It completely exempts these signs from state regulation and would allow ads for all types of alcohol, fast food, and other products even if those things weren’t sold in the arenas and stadiums. The signs will not only blight city skylines but pose a dangerous distraction for hundreds of thousands of drivers using those roads and freeways.”*

As one of California’s largest beneficiaries of alcohol lobbying money, Senator Padilla, has consistently proposed legislation to tear down California’s alcohol regulations which in turn favor beer sales. SB 31 will specifically benefit Budweiser too as it has been granted exclusive rights to advertise through a sponsorship agreement at the proposed Farmer's Field Stadium in downtown Los Angeles under the management of AEG Entertainment.

"The alcohol producers and dealers have no limit on how much money they can spend on advertising to convince our youth to start drinking and to convince our community at large, to drink more," stated Ruben Rodriguez, Chair of the Coalition to Ban Alcohol Ads in Los Angeles. "Only our top state official can stop this train wreck of public policy. Please Governor Brown, veto SB 31 and say no to alcohol ads."

In a January 2013 Journal of Pediatrics report entitled [Exposure to Alcohol Advertisements and Teenage Alcohol-Related Problems](#), researchers published conclusive evidence that, *"Alcohol ad exposure and the affective reaction to those ads influence some youth to drink more and experience drinking-related problems later in adolescence."* Their study looked at 3,890 Los Angeles area students, surveyed once per year across 4 years from the 7th through the 10th grades. The report identified a clear link between alcohol advertising, how it leads to alcohol use and then to problems in the life of youth in Los Angeles. *"We strongly support efforts to... ban alcohol advertising from city owned and controlled property to help protect the health and safety of our youth,"* stated Jerry L. Grenard, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, School of Community and Global Health, Claremont Graduate University, co-author of the report.

The connection between exposure to alcohol advertising and underage youth consumption is also well documented from both the federal courts and other extensive research. Youth in markets with greater alcohol advertising expenditures drink more. Each additional dollar spent on alcohol advertising raises the number of drinks consumed by 3%. Other studies have reported similar relationships, including a 2006 study that found reductions in alcohol advertising could produce declines in adolescent alcohol consumption (a 28% reduction in alcohol advertising could reduce adolescent monthly alcohol consumption from 25% to 21%, and binge drinking from 12% to 8% -11%).

Maintaining a ban on alcohol advertising on public property will help reduce repetitive, unavoidable, excessive youth exposure to alcohol ads. Given the associations between alcohol advertising and youth drinking behaviors, continuing such a ban will likely lower the risk of underage youth to start drinking earlier, and lower alcohol consumption of those who already drink. Allowing more alcohol ads will increase the state's catastrophic costs of alcohol related harm which Alcohol Justice estimates at over **\$38 billion annually**.

"Over the years it has become obvious who Senator Padilla is representing, and it's not his constituents who are drowning in alcohol-related harm," stated Bruce Lee Livingston, Executive Director/CEO of Alcohol Justice. *"He represents the alcohol corporations that contribute heavily to his electoral campaigns. That is why we are asking public health advocates throughout the state to tell Governor Brown to veto SB 31. Hopefully the Governor, unlike Senator Padilla and the legislature, will put the public health and safety interests of all California residents and visitors ahead of the greedy interests of Big Alcohol."*

[CLICK HERE to TAKE ACTION – ASK GOVERNOR BROWN to VETO SB 31](#)

For more information please visit www.AlcoholJustice.org and [http://noalcoholads.org/](http://noalcoholads.org)

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