

News Release

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States Critical in Protecting Youth from Alcohol Marketing

Report details state-by-state legal statutes that can protect youth

Washington, DC - Key state regulatory strategies can reduce youth exposure to alcohol advertising according to a report released today by the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth at Georgetown University. The report, which includes state-specific information, assesses current state practices, evaluates each state's current law and provides a means for each state to evaluate priorities for enforcement as well as statutory and regulatory reform.

"This report shows the critical role states can play in protecting our kids from alcohol industry marketing efforts," said the Center's executive director Jim O'Hara. "Given the level of alcohol marketing reaching kids under 21, we believe that a greater effort at the state and national level will ensure that youth under 21 are no longer overexposed to alcohol industry messages."

The concern about alcohol marketing and underage drinking has been heightened by studies that highlight the impact of advertising on youth attitudes toward drinking and drinking practices. These findings are bolstered by similar studies on tobacco advertising, which have shown that tobacco ads influence young teenagers to experiment with tobacco. The alcohol industry spends more than \$4.5 billion each year marketing its products. "Advertising works. Otherwise alcohol advertisers wouldn't spend billions each year to market their products," O'Hara added. "Just as states played a major role in the successful effort to reduce youth exposure to tobacco marketing, we need a similar effort to reduce alcohol marketing aimed at youth."

In analyzing each state's statutes and regulations the Center found specific codes that can protect youth from ads that overexpose or mislead them. Sample codes include those that:

- **Establish Explicit Jurisdiction over In-State Electronic Media.** Thirteen states - Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah and Virginia - have provisions that explicitly provide the alcohol control agency jurisdiction over both television and radio advertising that originate in-state.

- **Prohibit Alcohol Advertising that Targets Minors.** Eleven states - Alabama, Delaware, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia - explicitly prohibit this advertising.
- **Restrict Sponsorship of Civic Events.** Five states - Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, Utah and Virginia - have statutes addressing sponsorship of college or school events, but do not have statewide provisions addressing sponsorships in public or private venues, although some local jurisdictions have enacted such measures.
- **Restrict Alcohol Advertising on Alcohol Retail Outlet Windows and Outside Areas.** Seven states - California, Kansas, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, and Virginia - have statutes addressing this issue, with the strongest being Virginia, which limits the number, size and content of window advertisements and prohibits indoor advertising that can be viewed from the outside.

"Alcohol is the drug most often abused by teens, and alcohol use plays a substantial role in all three leading causes of death among youth," said Dr. David H. Jernigan, the Center's research director. "It is important for all states to implement effective policies to protect our kids."

Background on the report: The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth commissioned the Legal and Enforcement Policy Analysis Division of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation to examine state regulations for both measured and unmeasured alcohol advertising.

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