



March 18, 2015

Senator / Assembly Member  
California Legislature  
1020 N Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Ban Powdered and Crystalline Alcohol Products in California**

Dear Senator / Assembly Member:

Alcohol Justice (formerly Marin Institute) is a respected alcohol industry watchdog that has been a leading alcohol research and advocacy institution for more than 27 years. We are alarmed that the U.S. Alcohol & Tobacco Tax & Trade Bureau approved labels this month for the powdered alcohol product Palcohol. Meanwhile, Louisiana, South Carolina, Vermont and Virginia have passed legislation since April 2014 banning the product, Alaska already has a ban on the books and Pennsylvania refuses to sell it at state-run stores. [At least fourteen more states](#) are currently considering bills to enact powdered alcohol bans, *but California is not yet one of them.*

This letter is a call for you to propose legislation in 2015 to amend (as emergency legislation) Title 18 of the California Code of Regulations, Article 6, Classification of Particular Beverages, Regulation 2557, concerning Powdered Distilled Spirits. We ask that the regulation be amended to ban powdered or crystalline distilled spirits in California.

We oppose the sale of powdered or crystalline alcohol products because alcohol-related harm is a serious public health concern in California. Products such as Palcohol represent a serious new threat to the health and well being of young people.



**Public Health Concerns**

**Recipe for harm** – We offer this list of health and safety concerns associated with powdered or crystalline alcohol is chilling:

- The cost is too low and thus will encourage over-consumption
- Easy youth access to the packets

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- Size and shape of packets in similar to nonalcoholic children's drink packets (i.e. juice squeeze containers)
- Potential mixing with a small amount of water or combining multiple packets to make a single drink more potent than infamous Everclear
- Potential mixing of powdered alcohol with liquid alcohol
- Potential mixing powdered alcohol with energy drinks (i.e. caffeinated beverages)
- Potential mixing of powdered alcohol with youth-oriented alcopops (i.e. flavored malt beverages)
- Concealment by underage drinkers attending events/locations where alcohol is prohibited
- Easy theft of the product by underage youth
- Ingestion of the product by snorting, with toxic effects
- Ingestion of the product by eating, as you would sugar, with toxic effects

**California is the largest alcohol market in the U.S. and suffers the most alcohol-related harm.**

According to the latest CDC data, California's estimated share of the country's annual alcohol-related harm is over \$22 billion dollars, with nearly 10,000 deaths. Alcohol-related harm to California youth includes death, injuries, assaults, sexual violence, unsafe sex, suicide attempts, and academic problems.

**Permitting the sale of dangerous alcoholic products sends the wrong message.**

Allowing another dangerous alcohol product to be sold in the State, especially a product that can be easily abused by youth and young adults sends the message that California doesn't care about their health and well-being. Allowing powdered alcohol to be sold in the State gives the impression that making money from product sales is more important than their health and safety. Rather than increasing the potential for alcohol-related harm in California, the State should ban the products.

Please do all you can to introduce, support and pass legislation this year to ban powdered and crystalline alcohol products.

Please contact me directly as we would love to be sponsors of such legislation.

Sincerely,  
Bruce Lee Livingston  
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Alcohol Justice  
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Cc *Members California State Senate*  
*Members California State Assembly*  
*California State Attorney General*

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