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Blockbuster Reports Destroy Arguments to Extend California Last Call to 4 a.m.

SB 905 Author Accused of Spreading 'Junk Science'

SACRAMENTO, CA (June 23, 2018) At a press event on the Capitol steps last week, [California Alcohol Policy Alliance \(CAPA\)](#) and [Alcohol Justice](#) released two new [reports](#) on the statewide public health and safety threats of extending alcohol sales to 4 a.m. The groups and individuals condemned SB 905 (Wiener) that would launch a dangerous seven-city, five-year experiment that could expose over 76% of California's population to increased alcohol-related harm.

"In the past ten years, at least five major studies have reviewed all the evidence around late last call times. Every one of them concluded they lead to more violence, crime, victimization, crashes, and injury," stated Carson Benowitz-Fredericks, I Research Manager, Alcohol Justice, lead author of [THE LATE NIGHT THREAT: Science, Harms and Costs of Extending Bar Service Hours](#). *"California is supposed to be a place where evidence-based policy beats out cash-based policy. SB 905's authors need to take the harms from alcohol as seriously as they take the dinners from lobbyists."*



(Ramon Castellblanch)

The bill, authored by Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), plastered with the labels of “NIGHT LIFE MATTERS” and “LOCAL CONTROL,” resonated with the state Senate that passed it. The Senate vote, though not unanimous, was a clear statement that it valued alcohol sales more than public health and safety, and nightclub and bar interests over neighborhood concerns.

The second report presented was a blistering critique titled: [The effect SB 905 would have on alcohol-related crashes & Senator Wiener’s post hoc fallacy.](#) “The table Senator Wiener passes around, claiming there’s no harm in keeping bars open to 4 a.m., is a piece of junk science,” reported Ramon Castellblanch, Ph.D., President, Quality Healthcare Concepts, Professor Emeritus, Health Education, San Francisco State University and author of the report. “He’s using it to misinform legislators and to lie to them about the DEADLY effects of bar hours being extended to 4 in the morning.”

“Over 40 years of peer-reviewed data confirms that extending alcohol sales would mean more intoxicated drivers on the road during early morning commutes, more DUI crashes, injuries and deaths,” stated Mark B Horton, MD, MSPH, Health Leadership Consultant, Prior State Health Officer and Director, California Department of Public Health. “The studies also consistently show that extending hours leads to substantial increases in emergency room visits and violent crime.”

“The residents of West Hollywood I know don’t want this. They don’t want more noise, they don’t want more drunkenness, and they don’t want more fighting and drunk driving. Period. They don’t want it,” implored Sarah Blanch, Director of the Westside Impact Coalition, Co-Chair of the Los Angeles Drug and Alcohol Policy Alliance (LADAPA). “I can say for certain that this bill is not good for our community, for Los Angeles County, and I doubt it will have anything but negative impacts for California’s other counties.”



(Pamela Weller)

According to CDC-reviewed reports, California already suffers \$35 billion in alcohol-related harm every year, with 10,500 lives lost and hundreds of thousands of additional injuries. Local and state governments share of this grisly tab is a whopping \$14.5 billion annually.

“There is consensus among state public health and safety providers that no part of the alcohol industry deserves additional competitive advantages until they start paying their fair share of California’s alcohol-related problems,” stated Thomas Renfree, Deputy Director, Substance Use Disorder Services, County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California. *“The last time the California alcohol excise tax increased was in 1992, when it was raised by one cent. Without strong, uniform, state protections, power over health regulations often revert, not to the community, but to wealthy businesses—in this case, Big Alcohol and large entertainment concerns. SB 905 places economic interests ahead of public health, it needs to be stopped in the Assembly.”*



(Lynne Browne)

“Please consider our families that will be getting on the road while bars are letting out. SB 905 is a very bad idea. Protect our families,” said Sandy Logan, CCPS, ICPS, Prevention Coordinator, National Council on Alcohol & Drug Dependence (NCADD) of San Fernando Valley. *“Por favor, consideren a nuestras familias que se pondrán en camino mientras los bares están dejando salir. SB 905 es una muy mala idea. Proteger a nuestras familias.”*

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) joined in the opposition rally against the bill. *“SB 905 lacks any evidence to support the bill author’s claim that extending hours of sale would not increase alcohol-related harm,”* stated Lynne Brown, Program Manager/Law Enforcement Liaison, Mothers Against Drunk Driving. *“MADD supports the uniform statewide cut-off limit on alcohol sales. This uniform time helps prevent barhopping to find one last drink at establishments with later closing times. Far too often, the search for ‘one last drink’ results in drunk driving.”*

“Last February, my dear friend David lost his life to a drunk driver after a 2 a.m. closing time,” said Pamela Weller, Cal State Dominguez Hills public health graduate and Asian American Drug Abuse Program (AADAP) volunteer. *“Please take a moment to think about all the people that will be affected if any bar stays open until 4, the early commuters, truck drivers, law enforcement, youth, young adults, and family members. The only individuals that will benefit from SB 905 will be people who make a profit off of alcohol sales. I deeply urge you to vote NO on SB 905.”*

Gennessis Jerez, member of the Coalition to Prevent Alcohol-Related Harms in LA Metro (COPALM) offered this comment at the report release: *“When families are on constant survival mode and have limited literacy or luxury of time they become targets for the expansion of nightlife and ultimately don’t get a choice and are the most impacted.”*

“SB 905 is a clumsy attempt by Senator Scott Wiener to pull the wool over the eyes of the legislature by pitching it as a pilot project, but don’t be fooled,” stated Bruce Lee Livingston, Executive Director / CEO of Alcohol Justice, co-author of [**THE LATE NIGHT THREAT: Science, Harms and Costs of Extending Bar Service Hours**](#). *“SB 905 is nothing more than a greedy grab for more profits by promoting binge drinking in the wee hours of the morning. When you account for how far young drinkers will drive at 2 a.m. to get a last couple of drinks, 76% of the state’s population will be at risk of commute hour DUI collisions in what we call the ‘Splash Zones’. We urge the Assembly to do what the Senate could not and STOP this dangerous experiment.”*

“The bottom line for this bill is that it will create a dangerous policy change for California,” said Michael Scippa, Public Affairs Director at Alcohol Justice. *“This change will economically benefit alcohol sellers in the epicenter of night-life entertainment districts while radiating harms and costs to ‘Splash Zone’ surrounding communities when ‘commuting drinkers’ return home impaired.”*

The bill faces a key committee vote on Thursday, June 28, 2018. Alcohol Justice and California Alcohol Policy Alliance urge the public to [**TAKE ACTION at alcoholjustice.org to tell Assembly Members to vote NO on SB 905.**](http://alcoholjustice.org)



(Bruce Lee Livingston)

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