

Reader says extending bar hours would create additional dangers

Monday, February 27, 2017

Editor: It is well known that one of society's highest priorities is the safety and protection of its citizens, especially youth. To that end, we work, individually and collectively, against the abuse of alcohol and other drugs.

One of the ways we accomplish that mission is by opposing legislation that might be unhealthy to teens, youth and the community at large. Senate Bill 384 (Weiner-D-SF), soon to be heard in the California Legislature, is just one of those pieces of legislation. The United Methodist Church, through its association with Alcohol Justice and California Council on Alcohol Problems and with knowledge based on scripture and our historical stance, is opposing SB 384 for the following reasons: Alcohol related deaths in California top 10,500 per year with over 900,000 alcohol related incidents of harm.

Alcohol is the leading cause of death among teenagers in California. For youth and young adults from 0-34 alcohol contributes annually to 605 motor vehicle deaths, 674 homicides, 104 suicides and 136 poisonings.

State, city and public health providers do not have the resources to mitigate against the economic and social harms of two more hours of late night alcohol consumption. We need to trust the public health experts on this issue and oppose Weiner's bill. The bill language fails to address the need to compensate the increased local costs of enforcement, compliance and mitigations to ensure that the public health and safety are protected. SB 384 4 a.m. bar bill. It's a very bad policy change for California.

Rosie Bachand

CA/NV Conference United Methodist Church Addiction and Recovery Coordinator