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Dangerous 4 a.m. Bar Bill Provokes Immediate Statewide Opposition

CAPA Campaign to STOP California State Senator Wiener's SB 384 hits the ground running.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (February 16, 2017) - [California Alcohol Policy Alliance \(CAPA\)](#) launched a statewide campaign today to stop a dangerous bill that would allow alcohol-serving establishments in California to stay open until 4 a.m.

[SB 384](#), authored by Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco), is a carbon copy of a failed 2013 bill by then Senator Mark Leno that was introduced for special interest groups seeking to extend drinking hours in California from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m.

"Extending bar hours to 4 a.m. will cause neighborhood noise and violence later into the night, fill emergency rooms later into the night, and cost cities more in police and ambulance services," said Richard Zaldivar, Founder and Executive Director of The Wall / Las Memoria Project of Los Angeles. *"Selling alcohol from 2 to 4 in the morning is just a bad idea for communities and government."*

"Nothing has changed since 2013," stated Bruce Lee Livingston, Executive Director / CEO of [Alcohol Justice](#). *"A bill to allow the sale of alcohol until 4 a.m. will create dangerous new public policy that threatens health and safety throughout California. Alcohol-induced highway mayhem will extend into early commute hours benefiting no one but bar & restaurant owners at public expense."*

California already suffers more annual alcohol-related harm than any other state:

- 10,572 deaths
- 17,700 hospitalizations
- 123,841 years potential life lost (chronic causes)
- 180,017 years potential life lost (acute causes)
- \$34 billion cost to public
- \$13.7 billion cost to government

Statewide, opponents insist that if SB 384 becomes law, there will be an arms race of bars, restaurants and nightclubs competing for the special 4 a.m. ABC licenses and entertainment district designation. With reckless disregard for public health and safety, owners will claim job development, tax revenue, and more tourist dollars, while ignoring substantial evidence of increased alcohol-related harm and cost.

“Our coalition members are very concerned that extending the sale of alcohol to 4 a.m. would sacrifice community safety so bars and nightclubs can make more money,” stated Lisa W. Bridges, Coalition Coordinator, Santee Solutions Coalition, San Diego County. *“Allowing bars and clubs to sell alcohol until 4 a.m. will result in more alcohol-related crashes putting workers and children at greater risk during early morning commute.”*

SB 384 provides no extra funding to help police, fire, EMS, and emergency department staff to clean up the extra harm that two more hours of alcohol consumption will cause. Such alcohol-related problems will include violence, emergency room admissions, injuries, alcohol-impaired driving, and motor vehicle crashes. All of this *will* require additional law enforcement response and place an increased burden on local agencies. Any small state license fees will not offset these costs and local communities will not experience a positive fiscal impact. However, residents of areas with bars that remain open until 4 a.m. will surely experience a negative impact on their quality of life.

“Most people out drinking at 2 a.m. are already buzzed,” said Ruben Rodriguez, Executive Director of San Fernando’s Pueblo y Salud, Inc., and Chair of the Los Angeles Drug and Alcohol Policy Alliance (LA DAPA). *“To keep serving them alcohol for two more hours can only be called a crazy and stupid idea. Street violence, drunk driving and late night noise can only increase during the graveyard shift.”*

In 2010, the U.S. Community Prevention Services Task Force, chaired by Jonathan Fielding, then Director of Public Health and Health Officer for Los Angeles County, recommended to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that extending hours of service is not recommended. ***Task Force evidence showed that two more hours of alcohol sales will nearly double alcohol-related violence, crime, police calls, emergency room visits, etc.***

“I live in a neighborhood with one alcohol license for every 213 people. High crime is known to accompany an over concentration of alcohol licenses,” stated Scott Chipman, Founder, San Diegans for Safe Neighborhoods. *“An extension of alcohol service to 4 a.m. would no doubt increase negative impacts of noise disturbances in nearby neighborhoods as well as increase the common alcohol-related crimes of drunk driving, assault, rape, and others.”*

“The primary role of the Legislature is to promote and safeguard the well being of the people of California,” stated Rev. James B. Butler, Executive Director, California Council on Alcohol Problems. *“Unfortunately, SB384 will only benefit those who profit from the manufacture and sale of alcohol; and the extension of hours will increase the personal tragedies and financial costs of alcohol related harm. The people of California expect and deserve more than this type of Legislation.”*

Donn Peterson, President of the California College and University Police Chiefs Association, announced their strong opposition to Senate Bill 384: *“The unintended consequences of this bill are very serious”, said Chief Peterson. “They include the deterioration of quality of life for neighborhoods adjacent to late night drinking spots, drinkers driving from areas where bars close earlier all the way to the later last call bars, late night drinkers sharing the road with early morning commuters, increased DUI accidents and fatalities, and the limited budgets all of us in law enforcement have to deal effectively with the extra service calls.”*

“The bar tab for SB 384 will fall on the taxpayers for police, sheriffs, emergency services, and the California Highway Patrol. Bars, restaurants and Budweiser and Coors already don’t pay for \$34 billion annually in harm they cause in California,” said Livingston. *“With Senator Wiener’s 4 a.m. bar bill they will escalate that harm with more binge drinking, drunken violence and highway deaths.”*

In California, more than 75% of alcohol-related deaths come from homicide, poisoning, falls, and motor vehicle crashes, all of which could increase with the usual binge drinking cutoff time extending to 4 a.m. Levels of intoxication continue to increase for 30 to 90 minutes after the last drink, so for many 4 a.m. last call drivers, their intoxication could peak at 5 or 5:30 a.m., not an unusually early commute time for workers in many parts of the state.

“I am afraid Senator Wiener is out of touch with the neighborhoods and under the influence of the restaurant and bar side of the alcohol business,” added Livingston. *“We urge the California public to **TAKE ACTION** to tell Senator Wiener and other state leaders that AB 384 is a rotten deal for the state and all its residents and visitors.”*

Current members of CAPA include:

Alcohol Justice	Partnership for a Positive Pomona
Alcohol-Narcotic Education Foundation	Paso por Paso, Inc.
ADAP, Inc.	Project SAFER
Behavioral Health Services, Inc.	Pueblo y Salud
CA Council on Alcohol Problems	Reach Out
Center for Open Recovery	San Marcos Prevention Coalition
Eden Youth and Family Center	San Rafael Alcohol & Drug Coalition
Institute for Public Strategies	SF DogPAC
FASD Network of Southern CA	SAY San Diego
FreeMUNI – SF	Saving Lives Drug & Alcohol Coalition
Friday Night Live Partnership	Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc.
Koreatown Youth and Community Center	The Wall Las Memorias Project
L.A. Drug & Alcohol Policy Alliance	UCEPP / Social Model Recovery Systems
Lutheran Office of Public Policy CA	Women Against Gun Violence
MFI Recovery Center	
Mountain Communities Family Resource Center	

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