

August 31, 2010

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Sent Via Facsimile: (916) 558-3177

RE: VETO Request – AB 605 (Portantino) Tastings/Consumption Events

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

The *California Council on Alcohol Problems* strongly requests your veto of the radical and extremely provocative bill, AB 605 (Portantino). This “gut-and-amend” measure seeks to legalize consumption of all alcoholic products at every grocery market and liquor store in California, under the guise of “tasting events.”

CCAP is a citizen nonprofit organization representing nearly 9,000 church congregations and officials, as well as hundreds of individuals who have witnessed or experienced the harmful impact that alcohol can have on individuals, families, and communities. One of our missions is to monitor and seek to influence those statewide policies that could increase those negative impacts.

This measure is not a small expansion of existing tastings laws; AB 605 is a dramatic leap to authorize such give-away’s at off-sale premises, including grocery stores; and the only separation between the children who shop in these stores will be a rope-line connected to or contiguous with the liquor aisle. Have we really reached a point in our state’s history in which we can support the public consumption of alcohol in front of children in our local grocery stores? Do we want our community markets to become the epicenter of vagrants and others seeking a free shot and beer?

Here are several reasons to veto this irresponsible legislation:

- AB 605 was **gutted-and-amended** in the final two months of Session to become a bonanza for the alcohol industry lobby, setting a national benchmark for such “tastings” events.
- This bill **seeks to legalize alcohol consumption at all community grocery markets** (*Raleys, Albertsons, Safeway*, etc.) and every liquor store!
- This would **dramatically alter the category of “off-sale” premise licenses**, since consumption would now be allowed at such premises and on a large scale.
- This bill **exempts such “tastings events” from most local zoning restrictions**, undue concentration limitations, and other local governing regulations.

Please do not convert our community markets into bars. Please veto AB 605.

Sincerely,

FRED JONES
CCAP Legislative Advocate