

CALCAP, ANEF & CCAGE

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5 SEPTEMBER 2007

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Dear friends of CalCAP,

As summer draws to a close, students return to school and we see the days growing shorter, I invite you to reflect upon a truly wonderful August for the friends and supporters of the California Council on Alcohol Problems. On August 14, the Board of Equalization properly classified Alcopops as distilled spirits for tax purposes. This means that the price will increase, and since underage drinking is price sensitive, it will help in our fight to prevent underage drinking.

We also received some good news from the city of Dixon. As you read in our last newsletter, by a vote of the people, that city successfully stopped the building of a racetrack in their town. In August, the Magna Corporation announced that they will not try again to have a track approved, and will be selling their property.



And, in another exciting turn of events, the four tribal compacts approved by the Legislature in June are being challenged with petitions that will require statewide voter approval on February 5, 2008.

Each of these victories is described in greater detail in our newsletter.

I hope that you have had a great summer. As you can tell, your support of CalCAP is cause for a Victory Celebration!

James B. Butler,
Executive Director

Now you know!

According to the California Highway Patrol, 42 people died in alcohol related crashes during the Labor Day Weekend in California. Unfortunately, you probably did not read about this in your local paper.

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2007 LEGISLATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

As of the writing of this Newsletter, the State Legislature is finishing their work for 2007. In our "Legislative Summary", which will be printed and mailed in October, the fate of some of the

many bills related to gambling and alcohol will be known and reported. We are optimistic that many of the bills that we have been following will provide more victories for our cause and efforts.

The ACAP meeting will feature speakers from the Center for Disease Control and the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

ACAP ANNUAL MEETING

On September 18, 2007, the American Council on Alcohol Problems will hold their annual meeting in Atlanta Georgia. This year's meeting will feature Dr. Ruth Shults, from the Center for Disease Control, and George Hacker, who heads the Alcohol Policies Project for the Center for

Science in the Public Interest. These two featured speakers, along with reports from various states' organizations will provide information regarding both the problems and solutions to the problems caused by alcohol abuse.

A CALL TO ACTION FROM SURGEON GENERAL

In the Surgeon General's "Call to Action on Underage Drinking", he states "The prevention and reduction of underage drinking is the collective responsibility of the Nation." He then states that preventing underage drinking "is the responsibility of all people in all of the social systems in which adolescents operate: family, schools, communities, health care systems, religious institutions, criminal and juvenile justice systems, all levels of government, and society as a whole."

Because September is traditionally "back-to-school" month, the focus of this month's excerpt is upon the actions that schools can take to help prevent underage drinking. Among the many suggestions are: 1. Work to increase student's involve-

ment in their school; 2. Provide positive outlets for adolescent's energy and opportunities for validation and belonging; 3. Recognize stress causing situations, such as social transitions, obtaining a driver's license, and academic requirements, which raise the risk of alcohol usage; and 4. Provide information to parents on the consequences of underage drinking, school policies and local resources.

With the report of the Surgeon General helping to raise the awareness of problems caused by underage drinking, and specific strategies presented to address the issue, we have a powerful ally in our battle to prevent underage drinking and make a difference.

"WE OWE NOTHING LESS TO OUR CHILDREN AND OUR COUNTRY THAN SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF UNDERAGE DRINKING."

VICTORY IN DIXON

In our last newsletter we congratulated the people of Dixon, CA who resisted the efforts and money of the Magna Corporation to build a Racetrack in their small community. Although they were victorious, they had an expectation that the issue would not go away, and the long process (lasting more than two years) seeking to build a racetrack in their town would begin again in the near future. In August, the people of Dixon received some surprising and good

news. The Magna Corporation announced that they have abandoned their plans to build a racetrack in Dixon, and that they will be selling their property in that community. This victory is testimony to the value of persistence, and we again congratulate the people of Dixon on their relentless efforts to resist gambling in their community.



Race Horses will Not have a home in Dixon!

A GOLDEN STATE OPPORTUNITY



When the California State Legislature approved four tribal compacts last June, they did more than approve an additional 17,000 slot machines in California. They took the first steps down a path that will lead to the largest expansion of gambling in the history of the United States. Because these compacts are supported by both the governor and the legislature, stopping them from being implemented will be a difficult task, and dependent upon the people of California through the referendum process. By using that process, the voters of California will determine whether or not our state will accept this historical expansion of gambling or not. This will not be easily accomplished. First, more than 477,000 signatures must be gathered and submitted before October 10, and then we must engage in a campaign against four of the wealthiest casinos in California. This is the challenge we are facing.

Currently, petitions are being circulated throughout the state that will require voter approval in order for these tribal casinos to expand the number of slot machines they are allowed to have. If you have the opportunity to sign one of these petitions, I hope that you

will, as it is the first step in stopping this historical expansion of gambling.

This is both a rare and unique opportunity for the people of California to express their concern about the expansion of gambling in our state, as well as the terrible consequences resulting from problem and compulsive gamblers.

As you have read in previous newsletters, reports have been submitted by state agencies that clearly identify the costs of the many problems caused by gambling in our society; yet the leaders of our state are blinded by the false promises of wealth that gambling offers. There are still some who believe that our state can gamble its way into prosperity. We know that this is a lie, and we will have the opportunity to raise these issues and concerns during the campaign that will be waged between the four wealthy tribes and those who seek to stop this expansion of gambling.

The effort to stop these compacts will require that all of us who oppose them work together and prove the adage “politics make strange bedfellows.” This means individuals, churches, local and state anti-gambling organizations, will be working with gambling enterprises, including some California tribes, card rooms, and horse tracks. Business will be working with labor, and conservatives will be joining with liberals. But, we will be united in our efforts to stop this extreme expansion of gambling in California.

This is a “Golden State Opportunity” to stop the expansion of gambling, and The California Coalition Against Gambling Expansion (CCAGE) will be there. I hope that you, your church and community organizations will join our efforts to make a lasting difference in the quality of life in our state.

Sign a petition, spread the word about this historic expansion of gambling, and plan to vote “No” on the approval of more slot machines in California on February 5!!



CALIFORNIA COUNCIL ON ALCOHOL PROBLEMS

California Council on Alcohol Problems
803 Vallejo Drive
Sacramento, CA 95818

Phone: 916-441-1844
Fax: 916-441-1844
E-mail: calcap@sbcuc.net

Rev. James B. Butler
Executive Director

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.CALCAP.ORG

VICTORY!
VICTORY!
VICTORY!

OUR TASK AND MISSION

The CalCAP family, which includes the California Council on Alcohol Problems (CalCAP), the Alcohol-Narcotic Education Foundation (ANEF) and the California Coalition Against Gambling Expansion (CCAGE), is a statewide, faith based organization that seeks to prevent the moral, economic, scientific and social problems caused by alcohol and gambling. This is done through research, education, advocacy and lobbying. Thus, we raise the awareness of these problems among the people, and address the legislature regarding alcohol and gambling issues.

We are funded entirely by gifts from denominations, churches, church groups and individuals. We do not receive any financial support from any governmental agency or political party.

If you would like to be part of our information network, arrange for a program or preaching date, or support our work through-out California, please contact our Executive Director, the Rev. James Butler, or our Sacramento office, at 916 / 441-1844 or calcap@sbcuc.net. Our Mailing address is 803 Vallejo Way, Sacramento CA 95818.

VICTORY AT THE B.O.E.

On August 14, the Board of Equalization (B.O.E.) voted to approve a resolution that classified Alcopops as distilled spirits. Prior to this vote, the alcohol industry had argued and prevailed in their opinion that these beverages should be considered as beer for both tax and distribution purposes. Alcopops are sweet, fruit-flavored, colored drinks that are especially appealing to female underage drinkers, and although they begin as a beer, distilled spirits are added for flavoring and alcohol content. Thus, according to California Law, they should be treated as distilled spirits.

This is the conclusion that was reached by the B.O.E. and is expected to be implemented in July of 2008. During the review process, we had the opportunity to present written and oral testimony on three different occasions. Our efforts, along with other organizations of an "Alcopop Coalition," assisted the B.O.E. in reaching their decision and ultimately resulting in this monumental vote. Although the alcohol industry could either accept the decision and pay the extra taxes or change the formula and eliminate the distilled spirits from the product, we do not expect them to abandon their efforts to overturn this decision. Among the options available to them are to continue to challenge the B.O.E. through the appeal process or to have the state legislature pass a law that would define alcopops as beer.

Even as we celebrate this important vote of the B.O.E., we will remain vigilant in the months ahead, and be ready to meet any challenge of the alcohol industry as they continue to pursue our children.



The vote of the B.O.E. constitutes a major victory against the alcohol industry .