

CALCAP, ANEF & CCAGE

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HELP WANTED!



Dear Friends of CalCAP, Although it is not a typical "Help Wanted"

challenges in 2010. These will include attempts to legalize both Marijuana and Internet Poker in California. We will also continue to confront the alcohol industry regarding the tremendous damage done to individuals, families and communities by their product.

ad, the California Council on Alcohol Problems, the Alcohol Narcotic Education Foundation and the California Coalition Against Gambling Expansion need your financial help. There are efforts to drastically change our society for the worse, and these changes are being promoted by powerful and well financed interests. As you will read in this Newsletter, we expect to face some difficult

Because of these issues and more, it is essential that we maintain our presence and voice in Sacramento and throughout the state. It is critical that we register support or opposition to bills that are presented, offer testimony before Senate and Assembly Committees and participate in regularity agencies like the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board and the Gambling Control Commission.

HELP WANTED

99 Churches or Individuals who will commit to give \$1,000 or more in 2010 to help CalCAP, ANEF or CCAGE.

In order for that to happen, we need your help.

Our goal is to have 100 commitments of \$1000 or more for 2010. My wife Betsy and I are making that commitment. That means that we only have 99 to go. Will you be one of the 100?

Your Help is Wanted!

Rev. James B. Butler,
Executive Director

CHURCHES IN ACTION — MARTINEZ U.M.C.

Like many churches, the Martinez United Methodist Church has a time in worship when birthdays and wedding anniversaries are celebrated. However, unlike most churches, they also include an opportunity to celebrate "Recovery" anniversaries. This allows members and friends of the congregation to share the joy of their recovery, and the congregation to join in that joy. For many, this may be the first time that they feel

safe and comfortable enough to acknowledge that they are in recovery.

Our churches are intended to be places of support and encouragement for those who are struggling with issues in their life, including addiction and abuse of alcohol and other drugs, and a place of celebration for those who have overcome those struggles.

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CHARGE FOR HARM? TIME TO STAND AND BE COUNTED

When given the opportunity to approve a bill that would help mitigate the tremendous cost of alcohol to our state, the Health Committee failed to stand and be counted. AB 1019 was voted upon on January 5, in the Health Committee. Testimony had been given in 2009, so only the author, Assembly Member Jim Beall (D-San Jose), was permitted to give a short statement. The intent of this bill was to charge 10 cents-per-drink of alcohol and use the revenue to fund treatment, prevention and enforcement programs. The expected revenue was to be between \$1.2 and \$1.4 Billion. Although the estimated costs of alcohol to our state are more than \$30 Billion, this bill would have taken a small but significant step toward mitigating that cost, and expanding prevention and treatment.

Ten votes were needed to keep this bill alive. However, there were some representatives that did not wish to cast their vote and risk either angering the public or the alcohol industry. So when the time came for our representatives to stand and be counted, some simply chose to stay quiet, and let this bill die. The final vote was Yes-5, No-7, Abstain -7.

We continue to work with a coalition promoting a fee on alcohol, and are confident that another bill that will "charge for the harm" of alcohol will be introduced. When that happens we hope that our representatives will have the courage to vote for it.

ALCOHOL AND TEEN SUICIDE

A newspaper article in a Northern California community of 64,000 people, raised concern about a spike in teen suicide attempts. There was also a rise in teens being hospitalized who were deemed suicidal. There are many factors that contribute to teen suicide, but one that is too often neglected or under-emphasized is the use of alcohol and other drugs.

In a new study, researchers led by Dr. Alex Crosby of the Center for Disease Control's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control looked at the cases of suicide reported in 17 states in 2005 and 2006. They found that of those suicide victims whose blood alcohol levels were tested after their death, nearly a quarter had levels above the legal limit for driving a car.

"Alcohol is connected to suicides across all [racial and ethnic] groups," Crosby said. "When programs try to address suicide prevention, they should definitely include alcohol as one component."

Alcohol has long been a known risk factor in suicide, said Dr. Eric Caine, chair of psychiatry at the University of Rochester Medical Center in Rochester, N.Y.

"This is a really important paper because it underscores how much a common risk factor such as drinking contributes to something like suicide," Caine said. "Here's more data on how something like alcohol is fuel on the fire, and we need to ask ourselves what we are going to do about it."

What are we going to do about it? Parents need to know about the various pressures and stresses their teens experience, as well as the warning signs that may surface. But they also need to share with their children that alcohol will make a bad situation worse, and that it is not the answer to their problems.



TRIBAL CASINOS EXERT INFLUENCE

Many of you know that the Casino-owning tribes of California are exerting more and more influence in Sacramento through political contributions. These contributions are made at all levels and to both parties. An example of this is found in a Jan. 24, 2010 article in the Sacramento Bee by Dan Morain, Senior editor. In it he describes the connection between Casino owning tribes and Attorney General Jerry Brown, who may run for governor. Unfortunately Brown is not the only politician that receives contributions from these tribes, and this is not an isolated case. Below is an excerpt from Morain's article.

"Attorney General Jerry Brown casts himself as a no-nonsense prosecutor. But when it comes to

asserting state oversight of casinos owned by Indian tribes, he's been less than aggressive.

Tribes that own the state's most lucrative casinos are betting early that Brown will be the next governor. Based on his actions as attorney general, those casino owners will have a friend in the most important corner office in California.

In 2008, for example, Brown sided with the tribes and against the state Gambling Control Commission, which wanted to impose new requirements on the tribe's casino operations, similar to how Nevada casinos are regulated.

Since then, he has collected \$692,000 from tribes into various campaign and charitable accounts. Brown says there is no connection. But his view is that

the state has a limited role overseeing tribe-owned casinos – and that ought to give voters some pause, regardless of their views on gambling.

Billions of dollars flow through tribal casinos each year. Exactly how much is not known. Tribes don't need to disclose their take. Federal and state governments have ceded almost all oversight to the casinos' owners.

Still, governors can use their power to negotiate agreements that benefit casino patrons and communities around these casinos. If the past is any predictor, Brown's agenda as governor won't include taking tough stands against casino-owning tribes."

EFFORT CONTINUES TO LEGALIZE MARIJUANA

On January 12, the Public Safety Committee voted on a bill that would permit the recreational use of marijuana in California. The Alcohol-Narcotic Education Foundation joined a number of organizations registering opposition to this bill. These included associations of Sheriffs, Police Officers, Police Chiefs, District Attorneys, Narcotic Officers, Drug-Free Schools, and others. In spite of the promised economic benefit, research and testimony indicates that the harm will be far greater than any positive economic impact. However, the Committee made national news by approving this bill and sending it to the State Assembly Health Committee. The Health Committee did not act upon it in the allotted time, so it has died. That is some of the good news.

The Bad News is that the author, Tom Ammiano (D-San Francisco), has stated that he will introduce a similar bill before the end of February and try again. Further, there is an effort to have this issue placed before the voters as a Proposition, with the supporters expecting to raise more than \$10 Million to promote the legal recreational use of marijuana.

It is clear that this will be a major challenge for us in 2010, and we will need your prayers and financial support if we are defeat this effort to permit the recreational use of marijuana in California.



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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.CALCAP.ORG
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OUR TASK AND MISSION

The CalCAP family, which includes the California Council on Alcohol Problems (CalCAP), the Alcohol-Narcotic Education Foundation of California (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@calcap.org. Our Mailing address is 803 Vallejo Way, Sacramento CA 95818.

Because CalCAP is involved in lobbying efforts, donations to CalCAP are not tax-deductible. Donations to ANEF are tax-deductible.

INTERNET POKER

Another bad idea is being considered in Sacramento — Legalizing Internet Poker. The state legislature will hold a hearing in February on legalizing and regulating online poker within California according to State Sen. Roderick Wright (D-Inglewood). It is clear that there is a lot of momentum supporting this effort. Because of the severe budget crisis in California, many in the Legislature are looking for “Free Money,” and they think it is found in more gambling. Further, online poker is supported by the California Card Rooms and the Morango Tribe, one of the richest in the state, who will use their money and influence to promote this profit making scheme.

An example of the attitude of many legislators is found in a statement by Sen. Dena Florez (D-Shafter) who said, “I think it is workable and a potential source of new income.” If legislation is passed, California will be the first state to legalize and regulate intrastate online poker, but likely not

the last. Internet Poker in California will put pressure on other states to allow this as well

If that happens all of the problems associated with gambling will be exacerbated. Personal financial loss will soar, and there will be increases in unemployment, welfare, bankruptcies, homelessness, divorce and suicide. With Internet Poker, it will be possible to lose your house without ever leaving home. It is “Free Money” we cannot afford.

The California Coalition Against Gambling Expansion plans to attend all hearings and oppose any bill that will expand gambling to the internet.

CHURCHES IN ACTION . . .

The U. M. Church in Martinez is helping make that happen. They also have a special “Recovery Ministry” for those who are just beginning the journey to a “clean and sober” life.

Is your church involved in prevention ministries or ones that support recovery? Let us know in order that we can share your ideas with others.