

CALCAP, ANEF & CCAGE

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THEY CAN HEAR US NOW

CalCAP Friends,

Many of you remember the commercial that kept asking the question, "Can you hear me now?" As we have addressed the issues of alcohol, other drugs and gambling over the years, we may have wondered if we were being heard. Thanks to the donations of our supporters, the answer to that question is "Yes!"

More and more studies, news articles, editorials and public policy decisions are reflecting our position regarding the terrible consequences associated with these three concerns. In this newsletter, you will read:

- The California Assembly has proposed a tax increase on alcohol, though its final passage is not certain.
- The text from the Andy Rooney segment on "Sixty Minutes" related to gambling;
- Excerpts of a paper published by the American Society of Addiction Medicine on medical marijuana

Although there are a growing number of voices in research and the "public debate", we are often the only "faith based" voice (sometimes the only voice) presenting our viewpoint before the Legislature. And that voice is needed.

Currently the legislature is considering some terrible laws. **AB 605** will allow "alcohol tasting" (free samples) at neighborhood grocery stores and local mini-marts; and **SB 1485** will legalize internet poker in California, thus enabling people to lose their house without ever leaving home.

We are being heard, but there is a lot of work still to be done. And, in these difficult economic times, we need your financial support to accomplish it.

Rev. James Butler,
Executive Director

ACAP MEETING IN CALIFORNIA

On September 28-29, the American Council on Alcohol Problems (ACAP) will be meeting in Sacramento California. ACAP is an affiliation of groups around the country committed to preventing alcohol problems.

The theme for this year's meeting is "Prevention —The Answer." This meeting will be held at Westminster Presbyterian Church, located at 1300 N Street (across the

street from the Capitol), and is open to the public, so you are invited.

There will be representatives from various states, and a number of speakers addressing issues related to alcohol. If you need lodging, there are rooms reserved at a reduced rate at the Holiday Inn, Capitol Plaza (about 1 mile from the church). More information in our next newsletter.

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ASAM AND MEDICAL MARIJUANA



Below is an excerpt from a Public Policy Statement on “Medical Marijuana”. By the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM).

In the last twenty years, both the scientific community and the public have become interested in the therapeutic potential of cannabis and cannabinoids (Marijuana). Popular interest has focused on state initiatives and other legislation decriminalizing the use of smoked cannabis for personal medical use. Because of this legislation, herbal cannabis in various forms is now being distributed by dispensaries to large numbers of individuals with a wide variety of medical conditions. This cannabis is not, in most cases, standardized or quality-controlled; the dosage forms (smoked, vaporized, baked goods, teas, elixirs, etc.) do not provide a known and reproducible dose; and data on efficacy and adverse events are not being collected in a reliable manner.

With improvements in technology and the development of research tools, preclinical research has flourished. At present, however, only a few properly controlled clinical studies, of adequate size and duration, have investigated the use of cannabis or cannabinoid products in specific therapeutic contexts.

The FDA approval process ensures that a robust body of data accompanies a product when it becomes available to patients. The FDA has invited industry to develop botanically based products and has set forth the regulatory path that must be followed to ensure that such products meet the standards of modern medicine. It is feasible for cannabis-derived products to proceed down that path. Doing so will enable them to be recognized by the medical community as legitimate treatment options.

Under the current state distribution systems, physicians serve as the gatekeepers of patients’ access

to cannabis, yet they lack both information on the quality/composition of the cannabis materials and data on their efficacy/safety. When specific cannabis-derived or cannabinoid medications have passed through conventional regulatory approval processes, and their risk/benefit profile in a particular medical condition is known, physicians can be confident that they are meeting the standard of care when advising patients about potential treatment choices.

Recommendations:

ASAM asserts that cannabis, cannabis-based products, and cannabis delivery devices should be subject to the same standards that are applicable to other prescription medications and medical devices and that these products should not be distributed or otherwise provided to patients unless and until such products or devices have received marketing approval from the Food and Drug Administration.

HARVEY CHINN UPDATE

Harvey Chinn, who served as Executive Director and represented our interests before the State Senate and Assembly for 25 years, suffered a mild stroke in May and is currently at home recovering. He is scheduled to have surgery on his carotid artery on June 18.

If you would like to send him a card, his address is:

Harvey Chinn
2820 3rd Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95818

ANDY ROONEY ON GAMBLING

Below is the text from the Andy Rooney segment on 60 Minutes, May 16, 2010:

"I have good news for you tonight. According to an American Gaming Association report, revenue from casino gambling fell by almost two billion dollars last year.

A lot of people are out of work and it turns out that when people are unemployed, they gamble less. You'd think they might gamble more but they don't. There's some good things about everything, I guess.

In 2008 the casinos earned \$32.5 billion. Last year they earned only \$30.7 billion. I use the words "earned" and "only" loosely but casino income was down a lousy little two billion dollars last year. It's enough to bring tears to your eyes.

It's a law for people to protect themselves by wearing seat belts for their own safety when they're in a car. **How come the government doesn't protect citizens from losing their money by making gambling in casinos illegal?** [Emphasis added] There should be a sign in front of every casino that says "enter at your own risk...of losing your shirt."

The thing that bothers me most about gambling is that people fritter away money so they don't get to spend it on things that someone else has been paid to produce. Gambling produces nothing.

There's only so much money in the world and if it's lost at a gambling table, it's money that isn't spent on things America makes. I mean who's best for this country - a machinist at an automobile

plant in Detroit or a blackjack dealer in Las Vegas?

The gambling casinos keep something like 20 percent of everything bet for themselves, so there's no chance of anyone but the casinos winning over a period of time. They make billions - and where do the billions come from? They come from all of us because we're the losers. I mean, suckers is what we are.

If I write as though I was above all this, I'm not writing right. I've gambled half a dozen times in Las Vegas and even though I know how dumb it is. I think I can win. I've never won but that doesn't stop me from thinking "maybe next time.""

CELEBRATIONS WITHOUT ALCOHOL

Memorial Day is over, graduations are occurring and the 4th of July is just around the corner. Each of these celebrations is becoming more and more associated with alcohol.

Following the Memorial Day weekend, the California Highway Patrol reported an increase in the number of DUI arrests from 1,465 in 2009 to 1,541 this year. They also reported an increase in the number of DUI related deaths.

As Graduation Day approaches, parents and grandparents are beaming with pride. However, many are also concerned that lives will be ruined

by some alcohol-fueled tragedy. Which newspaper will carry the terrible news of a local graduate dying in an alcohol related incident? Some papers have already carried stories of graduation parties, fueled by alcohol, resulting in violence and death. Will your paper be next?

The Fourth of July is a time to celebrate our Independence. Maybe that should also include our freedom from alcohol destroying families.

When will we learn that alcohol does not need to be a part of our holidays or celebrations? Set an Example — Celebrate Alcohol Free!



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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.

AROUND THE CAPITOL

Because of a \$19+Billion deficit, the State budget has been the primary focus of the Legislature these past months. Included in the proposals to address this shortfall is an increase in the alcohol tax. This tax has not been increased since 1994, not even to account for inflation. We are supporting this proposal, and will continue to express our support. However, because of the power of the alcohol industry, it will be a challenge to have it adopted into the final budget.

The Legislature is also considering a gift to the alcohol industry that will impact every Californian in a negative way, **AB 605**. If the industry has its way, every big box store, grocery store, convenient store and gas station mini-mart that sells alcohol will be allowed to give away free samples of booze. Your trip to buy groceries with your children might be like a visit to the local bar. We are in strong opposition to this bill and the Legislature knows it. Will they have the courage

to say "No!" to the alcohol Industry?

The legislature is also considering a huge gift to the exploitive and predatory gambling industry. A bill (**SB 1485**) has been introduced that will allow internet poker in our state. This means that everyone with a computer and internet access will have a poker parlor at their fingertips. We have presented testimony about the dangers of internet gambling, and the growing number of problem and pathological gamblers, which cost the state more than \$1 Billion. We have sited studies showing the "addicting" effect of internet poker, especially among our youth, and the negative impact gambling has on our economy. We have even shown how enforcement of our current laws could reap hundreds of millions of dollars from this illegal activity. And still there is strong support among the Legislators.

Will our representatives represent us or the alcohol and gambling industries? We will see.