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L.A. Bus Shelters Minus Booze Ads Equals Public Health Victory Over Big Alcohol

Los Angeles City Council Vote Bans Alcohol Ads From Public Property

LOS ANGELES, CA (January 21, 2015) – [Alcohol Justice](#) joined with Los Angeles-based coalition - [NoAlcoholAds.org](#) - to thank members of the Los Angeles City Council for passing an ordinance long-sought by public health advocates to ban alcohol ads from L.A. city-owned and controlled property. The measure will reduce alcohol advertising in public spaces commonly seen by youth as a way to help discourage underage drinking. The ordinance, co-authored by Councilmembers Paul Koretz and José Huizar, was passed by unanimous vote of the 12 councilmembers present yesterday.

“The City of Los Angeles has taken another step towards truly protecting its most vulnerable residents,” stated Jorge Castillo, Advocacy Director for Alcohol Justice. *“We thank Councilmembers Huizar, Englander, and Koretz for their leadership on this critical public health and safety issue.”*

According to L.A. County Department of Public Health, alcohol-related crashes, violent crimes and deaths cost the county more than \$10.8 billion every year. Families and youth utilize city owned and controlled property on a daily basis, such as school buildings, recreation centers, libraries and bus shelters.

“This is in line with my administration’s focus on improving the quality of life for all Angelenos and helping boost the sense of pride people have in our neighborhoods,” said Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti.

Dennis Hathaway, president of the Ban Billboard Blight coalition said, *“We applaud the City Council for recognizing that the public right-of-way should not be used to help market products that cause harm to our youth and burden taxpayers with millions in costs for law enforcement, medical, and other services related to alcohol abuse.”*

The L.A. County Department of Public Health had recommended reducing alcohol advertising in public spaces and in areas commonly seen by minors as a way to help discourage underage drinking. Over the past few years UCLA, Rand Corp., Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth, Dr. Jonathan Fielding, Alcohol Justice, and the L.A. Department of Public Health submitted clear and compelling evidence that alcohol advertising on city owned property encourages youth alcohol consumption, which leads to harm.

“This ordinance says YES, we can do our part to limit underage consumption of alcohol and the problems associated with alcohol use,” stated Councilmember Koretz, co-author of the measure. *“I want to thank everyone involved...but first and foremost, I thank the people of the communities of Los Angeles for speaking up so caringly and powerfully, as is clear from the sterling efforts of the Coalition to Ban Alcohol Ads on Public Property in Los Angeles and Alcohol Justice.”*

“As a City, we must be conscientious of exposing our children to images which encourage irresponsible behavior,” said Councilmember Mitchell Englander. *“By banning alcohol advertisements on City property on future City contracts, we have taken an essential step in making the City of Los Angeles safer for our children and families.”*

In the summer of 2011, NoAlcoholAds.org, along with former Councilmember Alarcón, were able to influence a bus bench contract that effectively banned alcohol ads from 6,000 bus benches in L.A. Immediately after that victory they set a new goal to remove alcohol ads from all parts of the transit system.

“Communities benefit from healthy and positive messages and I’m proud of the City of Los Angeles for making the commitment to protect our families from alcohol advertisements,” stated Carol Lee, Community Organizer, Koreatown and Community Center. *“The City is paving the way for a healthier city, one which encourages healthy lifestyles and extracurricular activities for children.”*

“Alcohol ads on city property send the wrong message to our youth, especially children in low-income and working-class communities where these type of ads are more prevalent,” said Councilmember Huizar, one of the original signers of the motion. *“This is truly a community victory and I congratulate and thank all the groups and individuals who fought to make this a reality.”*

“Money should never be part of this discussion,” stated Kitty Dukakis, former First Lady of Massachusetts, a strong supporter of the campaign. *“It is very dangerous. Young people that see those signs suffer great harm in their lives from the use of alcohol.”*

“Today L.A. joins the Bay Area, San Diego, San Jose and many other [transit districts](#) in getting alcohol ads off bus shelters and other public property to help reduce alcohol-related harm,” stated Bruce Lee Livingston, Executive Director/CEO of Alcohol Justice. *“Now we can say that all California’s public transit systems will finally be free from Big Alcohol’s harmful messages.”*

Coalition Members include:

- American Indian Movement – WEST
- Alcohol Justice
- Asian American Drug Abuse Program Inc.
- Boyle Heights Stakeholders Association
- Boyle Heights Coalition for a Safe & Drug Free Community
- California Hispanic Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- Coalition to Ban Billboard Blight
- Community Coalition
- Institute for Public Strategies
- Koreatown Youth & Community Center
- Mexican History Foundation
- Mothers of East L.A. (MELA)
- Personal Involvement Center, Inc.
- P3 Partnership for a Positive Pomona
- Phoenix House
- Pillar of Fire Church
- Paso por Paso
- Pueblo y Salud
- Saving Lives Drug and Alcohol Coalition
- Sycamore Grove School
- Tarzana Treatment Centers & AWARE Coalition
- The Wall – Las Memorias Project
- United Coalition East Prevention Project
- Woman’s Christian Temperance Union
- Women Against Gun Violence
- Writers In Treatment

Supporters include

- Michael & Kitty Dukakis, former Massachusetts Governor & First Lady
- Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council
- California Council on Alcohol Problems
- California Alliance for Retired Americans
- Center for Living and Learning
- County Alcohol and Drug Program Administrators’ Association of California
- Crescenta Valley Drug & Alcohol Prevention Coalition
- Cri-Help
- Day One Pasadena
- Dr. J. Benjamin Hardwick
- Monsignor John Moretta
- NCADD East San Gabriel & Pomona Valleys
- Public Citizen
- Resurrection Church Neighborhood Watch – Los Angeles
- San Fernando Valley Partnership
- Venice Neighborhood Council

For More Information go to: www.AlcoholJustice.org and www.NoAlcoholAds.org



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