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## California Governor Newsom #GUI, Chooses Restaurant and Bar Profits Over Public Health & Safety

### ***Advocates say STOP using COVID to justify alcohol industry's mad grab for reduced regulations!***

SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA (June 10, 2021) – The [California Alcohol Policy Alliance \(CAPA\)](#) and [Alcohol Justice](#), the San Rafael, California-based alcohol industry watchdog are charging Governor Newsom with “Governing Under the Influence” #GUI for feeding the frenzy of alcohol deregulation to benefit his allies in the alcohol, restaurant and bar business at the expense of everyone else in the state.

*“While the need to support small businesses through economic recovery is important, it is critical to keep public health a priority. As a tax-paying constituent, and advocate for youth and community safety, my primary concerns are with sales of alcoholic beverages to-go and alcohol deliveries to consumers,”* said Jeanne Shimatsu, AADAP, Inc. (Asian American Drug Abuse Program), and CAPA spokesperson. *“Alcoholic cocktails are not an essential food or drink, and allowing ‘alcoholic beverages to go’ in easy-to-access containers within a vehicle is an open door to youth access and consumption. More importantly, it contributes to the dangers of ‘drinking while driving’ for everyone.”*

Newsom disappointed public health and neighborhood activists when he declared that he would be continuing last year’s numerous ABC “Regulatory Relief” orders until December 31, 2021 [“to promote public health.”](#) These orders were intended to be temporary tradeoffs, promoting alcohol consumption as a lifeline for restaurants and bars during the pandemic, with the intention that sales would return to normal when the state did.

Under Newsom’s new orders deregulation will continue to the end of 2021. Legislation seeking to make a number of deregulatory initiatives permanent could well pass and go into effect on January 1, 2022. Some have sunset dates of a year or two, but state public health and safety advocates fear the Governor’s actions will embolden the industry to continue pushing the legislature down a slippery slope to permanently reduce critical alcohol regulations, enhance their profits, and accelerate the already increasing rates of clinical dependence and alcohol-related crashes.

The glorification and promotion of public drinking at the core of Newsom’s recent actions will benefit business owners (including the governor’s own PlumpJack Group) at the public’s expense. The Governor and the California legislature currently seek to expand and extend alcohol sales and consumption on public sidewalks, alleys, parking lots, and “parklets”, along with the creation of “party zones,” and permanent cocktails-to-go by delivery without any ABC licensing, oversight, or required Responsible Beverage Service (RBS) training for third party home delivery companies.

*“Expansion of outdoor alcohol service, alcoholic beverages-to-go, and unregulated home alcohol delivery do NOT promote public health! In fact, Governor, there has been an increase in alcohol consumption in addition to pandemic stress, and loss of jobs contributing to more mental health issues including suicides,”* stated Maribel Briseño, CAPA Representative (Palmdale). *“Public health and safety are in danger. Instead of saving businesses—which also includes large corporate chains, not just small business—you should be focused on saving people’s lives, not prioritizing profit over lives!”*

While the Governor does not seem concerned, public health advocates are particularly worried that alcohol deliveries to customers, particularly through restaurants, lack regulation from point of purchase to delivery at a home, where there is no formal legal age check to verify that a sober adult is purchasing and receiving the alcohol order. In addition, the Governor seems tone deaf to the public safety risk of continuing to allow streets and sidewalks to be clogged with outdoor diners.

*“Allowing businesses to continue outdoor dining, infringes on rights of individuals with disabilities and pedestrians,”* added Briseño. *“People’s safety is put in danger by having to walk onto the street because tables obstruct their right of way on public walkways. This is a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We should not be compromising the public’s right of way.”*

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have estimated there are 10,500 alcohol-related deaths annually in California, 165,000 alcohol-related hospitalizations, \$14.5 billion in government costs, and \$35 billion in total related economic harm. Meanwhile, rates of alcohol use disorder have risen 50% or more over the past 20 years, and fatal motor vehicle crashes increased 30% from 2015 to 2020. *“In the eagerness to return to economic normalcy, we cannot by-pass common sense to gain a few more cents, especially when the cost is about people’s lives,”* added Shimatsu.

*“The industry and California government from the top down are locked in a sick codependent relationship,”* stated Bruce Lee Livingston, Executive Director/CEO of Alcohol Justice. *“The California Restaurant Association and the global alcohol corporation, Diageo, are behind much of the lobbying campaign pressuring the Governor and California legislature to choose regulatory relief over public health, public safety and neighborhood concerns.”*

Alcohol Justice and CAPA believe it’s time for Governor Newsom and the California legislators to honor their oaths of office to protect health and safety. Harm reduction should be the goal – not misdirected economic recovery promoting outdoor, public consumption of products that cause so much pain, suffering and death in California communities. The public is encouraged to take action to tell the Governor and their elected leaders that *public health is more important to the state’s recovery than public drinking.*

**Click here now: <https://bit.ly/3oFz1uo> or text **PUBLICHEALTH to 313131** to send your message to Governor Newsom and California legislators.**

