

American Council on Alcohol Problems

Resolution on Underage Alcohol Use and the Products Known as Alcopops

In the matter of examination of problems related to underage alcohol use and the products known as flavored malt beverages or alcopops.

Whereas, flavored malt beverages or alcopops are products known as starter drinks, created for and purposely marketed to young people across the U.S.; and...

Whereas, alcopops are sweet, fruity or soda pop flavored malt beverages that are particularly popular among 14-18 year old girls; and...

Whereas, the American Medical Association found through nationwide polls released in December 2004 that approximately one-third of teen girls have tried alcopops, and one out of six has done so in the past six months; and...

Whereas, more teen girls had drunk alcopops in the past six months than teen boys (31% versus 19%); and...

Whereas, 2005 Monitoring the Future data shows that 75% of current eighth-grade drinkers had an alcopop in the past month, compared to 70% of tenth-grade drinkers, and 65% of twelfth-grade drinkers; and...

Whereas, statutes in many states across the country clearly define alcopops as distilled spirits but sell them as malt beverages; and...

Whereas, independent research indicates that awareness of alcohol advertising and marketing has an impact on the beliefs and expectations of children and youth regarding alcohol use; and...

Whereas, classifying alcopops as beer allows the alcohol industry to reach more young people through advertising practices on television, increasing their accessibility to young people; and...

Whereas, permitting the products to be classified as beer allows the alcohol industry to receive preferential regulatory treatment, including an enormous tax benefit – up to 12 times lower in some states; and...

Whereas, the 21st amendment gives states express authority over the regulation of alcoholic products—alcohol state law supersedes federal recommendations by the Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau or any other Federal agency; and...

Whereas, states that continue to sell alcopops as beer have allowed the alcohol industry to continue to profit at the expense of America's children; and...

Whereas, Attorneys General in at least four States (California, Connecticut, Maine, and Virginia) have concluded that alcopop producers are violating State laws by marketing alcopops as beer; therefore,

Be It Resolved, the American Council on Alcohol Problems supports efforts to reverse improper tax classifications and sales practices of alcopops across the United States-- classifications that jeopardize the health, safety and welfare of the nation's youth and costs states across the country millions of dollars every year in lost tax revenue; and therefore...

Be It Finally Resolved, the American Council on Alcohol Problems contends these improper classifications of alcoholic beverages which allow the alcohol industry preferential regulatory treatment while placing the nation's most precious resource – its children – at risk is an intolerable injustice that states should set right at the nearest opportunity.