



March 21, 2017
Alcohol Action Alert

**Call your Rep. to Vote NO to Underage
 Drinking HB 494**



House Bill 494 was amended to allow underage drinking in restaurants if 18-20 year olds are with a parent, step parent, grandparent, or legal guardian. Underage drinking, even of beer and wine, is dangerous not only for the drinker but also for society. This bill sends the wrong message to children and adults.

The House Tourism, Hospitality & Craft Industries Committee voted 7 to 1 to pass HB 494. Committee Chairman, Rep. Ann Williams (D-11 Chicago), was the only NO vote.

The Illinois Licensed Beverage Association was the only group supporting the bill. Nine groups opposed the bill, including ILCAAAP, Illinois Public Health Association, IL Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics, and IL Association of Chiefs of Police.

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

1. Contact your State Representative and ask him/her to Vote NO on HB 494. (State Switchboard 217-782-2000).
2. Write a Letter to the Editor and send to your local newspaper. (See sample below.)
3. **Share this Alert** with your faith community and ask them to CALL and PRAY.
4. **Forward** to 10 others.

Sample Letter to the Editor

House Bill 494 would allow underage drinking in restaurants if 18-20 year olds are with a parent, step parent, grandparent, or legal guardian. **This bill sends the wrong message to children and adults.**

Underage drinking, even of beer and wine, is dangerous not only for the drinker but also for society. **Each year, approximately 5,000 young people under the age of 21 die as a result of underage drinking.**

The brain is developing and growing in young people until their mid 20's. Exposing the brain to alcohol during this period may lead to "subtle impairments as well as to further escalation of drinking", according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

Research shows that the minimum drinking age of 21 has had positive effects in decreasing traffic crashes, suicide, binge drinking, and decreased consumption of alcohol by those under the age of 21.

Underage drinking with parents does not lessen the harm.

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Illinois Church Action on Alcohol and Addiction Problems,
1132 West Jefferson, Springfield, IL 62702

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