

Senate Law and Justice Committee

Public Hearing to Consider the Governor's Liquor Privatization Plan

Hearing Room #1 North Office Building Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Tuesday, April 30, 2013.

Testimony of Samantha Lavelle - Council Rock Coalition for Healthy Youth



Samantha Lavelle Richboro Middle School, Council Rock School District, Bucks County, PA

Privatization of state-run alcohol sales is not only a costly solution, but a dangerous one.

Alcohol, if used incorrectly, can be a dangerous and devastating killer. It can kill the younger generations' friends and family, as well as their futures. State employees are likely to be more aware of underage sales and shoplifting, reducing the number of sales to minors and intoxicated persons. If alcohol is privatized, the retailers that sell it will have longer and later hours of sale than state-run stores, making it even easier for people that are underage and/or intoxicated to acquire it. In my middle school, we were told of students stealing from the local businesses, such as drugstores, convenience stores, and supermarkets. If kids and teens can and will steal a candy bar or other merchandise from one of these retailers, who says they can't or won't steal a bottle of alcohol from them?

Privatization of alcohol sales will also lead to higher consumption rates, due to the increased availability of alcohol. The volume of liter sales of alcohol could increase as much as 14.7%, which is the average consumption percentage difference between control and license states. This increased consumption of alcohol is associated with increased rates of traffic injuries and fatalities, crime, domestic violence, and child abuse, according to the Marin Institute. If these rates increase, it will be costly to the state through hospital charges, as well as having to employ more police officers, EMTs, and social workers.

The state will also lose control over alcohol sales if it is privatized. The state directly oversees the products that are sold in state-run stores, so it can quickly remove a product that it considers to be

deceptive, dangerous, or has inappropriate packaging or marketing. The control over on-site marketing of alcohol products will also be lost if sales are privatized.

This isn't a split issue. Choices should be decided based on what is beneficial to the health and well-being of the people of Pennsylvania, not based upon party. It doesn't matter what political group you belong to; alcohol and its effects affect everyone.

If alcohol sales are privatized, everyone will be affected. Whether it's a police officer who has to work more hours, a store owner who is having their alcohol stolen by minors, or a little girl that has to be rushed to the hospital because she was involved in a car accident caused by an intoxicated driver, the privatization of alcohol sales will hurt all of us.

Thank you.