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California State Senate Busted for GUI – Government Under the Influence - of *Big Alcohol*

27-9 Floor Vote Approves Dangerous 4 a.m. Bar Bill, Chooses Night Life Over All Life

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF (JUNE 2, 2017) - [Alcohol Justice](#), and the [California Alcohol Policy Alliance \(CAPA\)](#) condemned the California State Senate today for the senseless and short-sighted 27-9 vote that approved SB 384, the bill that would keep bars open to 4 a.m. and undermine public safety across the state. The vote came just days after the Senate Appropriations Committee agreed to release the bill despite the millions in state costs it would incur. [Now it is up to the citizens of California to make their Assembly members stand up and stop the bill.](#)

"The Senate should be embarrassed that they allowed this bill to even make it to the floor," said Michael Scippa, Alcohol Justice Public Affairs Director, *"let alone that they passed it."*

Extending last call times pose a number of hazards to public well-being. First and foremost, they extend drinking times and bring the most intoxicated people together in close proximity. This leads to increases in incapacitated drivers, crashes, violence, and victimization, as well as noise, nuisance, and property damage in the neighborhoods near late-closing bars.

More subtly, it stresses the resource of ERs, medics, and law enforcement personnel, who now have to spend more time dealing with the aftermath of drinking with no time to reset. It burnishes the tax coffers of urban areas willing to extend hours while severely impacting small suburban municipalities with damage and fatalities "party commuters" driving home. And with workaday commuters traveling ever longer hours, it sends impaired drivers headlong into rush hour traffic.

Most insidious, however, is the fact that this bill really only creates a major boon for large nightlife promoters while creating a pressure for smaller bars to stay open whether or not they want to. By stripping a simple and sensible public health regulation—one that has stood for decades without any substantive complaints—California shows a willingness to crumple to the slightest pressure from wealthy lobbies even while public health services are constantly cut.

It should be noted that the vote to approve SB 384 was far from unanimous. 22% of those who voted disapproved of the measure. Kudos to Senators Bates, Berryhill, Fuller, Gaines, Morrell, Nguyen, Nielsen, Vidak, and Wilk for choosing public health and safety over Big Alcohol interests.

Those Senators voting yes failed their duty to represent the interests of California citizens, but the fate of SB 384 is far from determined. *“A majority of the Senate may have ignored science and common sense,”* Scippa added, *“but there is still time for the grown-ups in the room to act.”*

Alcohol Justice urges concerned Californians to contact their member of the Assembly and make it clear how 4 a.m. last call times hurt the community. California needs politicians to push themselves away from the bar, stand up against alcohol money, preserve public health and safety, and stop subsidizing Big Alcohol.

[TAKE ACTION](#) to contact your member of the Assembly and tell them to Stop 384.

[READ MORE](#) about the moral bankruptcy and manipulative cynicism behind SB 384.

[READ MORE](#) about the harms from extending last call times.

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