



CONNECTICUT POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

342 North Main Street, West Hartford, Connecticut 06117-2507

(860) 586-7506 Fax: (860) 586-7550 Web site: www.cpcanet.org

Testimony to the Judiciary Committee

February 24, 2006

Chiefs Anthony Salvatore & James Strillacci, Connecticut Police Chiefs Association

We firmly support **RB #5211, AAC UNDERAGE DRINKING**, which will correct a defect in our liquor laws.

Connecticut General Statutes Section 30-86 already prohibits sale of alcohol to minors. CGS 30-89(a) bans procuring of alcohol by minors. CGS 30-89(b) forbids possession of liquor by minors in public places. It is clear that the legislature intended to keep liquor away from minors, but *no statute bars minors from having liquor on private property*.

High-school keg parties have squeezed through this loophole. Open-house bashes have led to binge drinking and drunk driving, each resulting in property damage, injury, and death.

Several Connecticut towns –including ours--have tried to fill the gap in statute by enacting ordinances banning possession by minors on private property.

This bill would make it an infraction for a minor to have alcohol, on public or private property, with three specific and reasonable exceptions. It would also make it an infraction for anyone owning or controlling any premises to allow illegal underage possession. Subsequent offenses would draw steeper fines.

A patchwork of local ordinances is a poor substitute for action by the General Assembly. The proposed change makes a strong statement that underage drinking is dangerous and that Connecticut will not permit it. The bill will enhance fairness by providing proper notice and allowing consistent application throughout the state. We encourage the legislature to take a stand on youthful drinking by passing this bill.

###