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MAR 31 2011

Appropriations Chairman



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Senate of Pennsylvania
MEMORANDUM

To: All Senators
From: Senator Jake Corman 
Date: March 30, 2011
RE: **Co-sponsorship Memo # 13** – Alcohol Violation Legislation

In the near future, I will introduce three pieces of legislation that seek to reduce the number of alcohol violations and distribute new fee money to the municipalities impacted by problem drinking. I have heard from many constituents in my district that alcohol abuse violations in or around college and university campuses are becoming increasingly difficult to manage. The negative impacts of these violations are growing and affecting the community, schools and students alike. By introducing the following three bills, I hope to provide a larger deterrent as well as more money to municipal police forces to prevent this type of activity:

1. Raising the fine amount for Underage Drinking (§6308 of Title 18) and Public Drunkenness (§5505 of Title 18). Currently, both underage drinking violations and public drunkenness violations are summary offenses, with maximum fines of \$500 for second and subsequent offenses and \$300 for all offenses, respectively. These fine amounts were set in 1972 and no longer provide a strong deterrent in today's dollars. Increasing these fines to a maximum of \$1,000 will not only provide an increased disincentive, but it will also allow the municipalities that feel the impact of these offenses to receive additional funding from fines.
2. Increasing the grading for underage drinking (§6308 of Title 18) on the third and subsequent offense to a third-degree misdemeanor. Underage drinking is a problem for communities and it does lead to larger problems. Regardless, underage drinking remains a summary offense, not a misdemeanor, even after repeated violations. With respect to other alcohol related violations in Title 18, misdemeanor grading for first or subsequent violations can currently be found in misrepresentation of age to purchase liquor or beer, the manufacture or sale of a false ID, and carrying a false ID.
3. Providing municipalities which host all or part of an institution of higher learning with the ability to set a \$100 court fee for all alcohol violations in their jurisdiction. The legislation provides that municipalities where colleges and universities are located may create a local law enforcement alcohol offense prevention unit to collect a fee from the courts to be used for the prevention of alcohol violations. All funds collected must be used for the prevention of alcohol violations through the law enforcement unit.

If you have any questions with regard to the legislation listed above, please contact Scott Sikorski in my office at 787-1377.

If you would like to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Kristi Kreiser in my office at 787-1378 or by email at kkreiser@pasen.gov.