

October 26, 2016

Jeffrey Reinbold
Assistant Director
Partnerships and Civic Engagement
National Park Service
1849 C St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Reginald Chapple
Division Chief
Office of Partnerships & Philanthropic Stewardship
1201 Eye St., NW, 9th floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

cc: Director Jonathan Jarvis

Dear Mr. Reinbold and Mr. Chapple,

As organizations dedicated to protecting public health – especially the health of children and adolescents – we are deeply troubled by the stated plans of the National Park Service (NPS) to allow permanent partnerships with alcohol companies, and are writing to **urge the NPS to abandon those plans as they are defined in Director’s Order #21: Philanthropic Partnerships**. Allowing alcohol brand logos within the park and establishing co-branded “relationships” with alcohol companies would encourage underage drinking and damage the reputation of national parks as safe spaces for children and families.

A large and growing number of longitudinal research studies have found a significant and consistent connection between youth exposure to alcohol advertising and underage drinking. Put simply, the more alcohol marketing messages young people see, the more likely they will be to start drinking, or the more they will drink if they have already started.¹ For these purposes, alcohol advertising includes youth exposure to logos and sponsorship messages² – like those currently planned by the NPS.

As you may know, underage drinking is a leading cause of harm among American children and youth. It is a major risk factor in the three leading causes of death among adolescents: homicide, suicide and unintentional injury³ – as well as a number of other serious long-term negative health and social consequences, including sexual assault, academic problems, anxiety and depression.⁴ In fact, recent neurological research has found that underage binge drinking may lead to brain and behavioral problems that persist into adulthood.⁵

Accordingly, we request that the National Park Service revise Director’s Order #21 to exclude lines 648-650, which state, “After the effective date of this Order and under its

provisions and standards, the NPS will permit—after thorough review—philanthropic partnerships with, and accept donations from, corporations that produce or distribute alcohol.”⁶ Instead, the NPS should maintain its current and longstanding position, that “corporate campaigns must be conducted with high standards that maintain the integrity of the NPS and its partners. Corporate campaigns which identify the NPS with alcohol or tobacco products will not be authorized.”⁷ The current policy rightfully acknowledges that partnerships with alcohol companies would tarnish the integrity and mission of the NPS.

As a public agency, the National Park Service should act in the best interest of public health and public safety. Allowing alcohol company logos to be associated with America’s national parks disregards public health and puts youth at risk of dangerous drinking behavior. The NPS centennial “thank you” signs exhibiting the Budweiser logo that were displayed in parks during August were a mistake that should not be repeated. Instead, America’s national parks should offer a safe and healthy environment for children and all park visitors. Again, we urge the NPS to reject the provisions in Director’s Order #21 that would allow the NPS to partner with alcohol companies.

Thank you for your prompt attention to these concerns. Replies should be directed to Diane Riibe, Chair of the U.S. Alcohol Policy Alliance at diane@alcoholpolicy.org.

Sincerely,

ACT Missouri

Addiction Treatment Services [Michigan]

Alamance Citizens for a Drug Free Community [North Carolina]

The Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Council of Orange County [New York]

Alcohol Justice

ASAPP'S Promise Community Coalition [New York]

ATOD Prevention Group [Ohio]

Camelot of Staten Island, Inc. [New York]

Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood

CanTeen [New York]

Center for Family Life and Recovery, Inc. [New York]

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America

Community Health Action of Staten Island [New York]

Council on Addiction of New York State

The Council on Addiction Prevention & Education of Dutchess County, Inc. [New York]

Council on Alcoholism and Addictions of the Finger Lakes [New York]

DARE Coalition Against Substance Abuse [North Carolina]

DePaul’s National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence-Rochester Area [New York]

Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse [New York]

Evalumetrics Research [New York]

Excelsior Springs SAFE [Missouri]

Freedom House Recovery Center [North Carolina]

Friends of Recovery New York (FOR-NY)
Fuquay Varina Citizens Against Drugs [North Carolina]
Gay Men's Health Campaign (GMHC) [New York]
HFM Prevention Council [New York]
Honorable William Bronrott
LEAF Council on Alcoholism and Addiction [New York]
Let's Talk SAFETY/SAFE in Harlem Coalition [New York]
Liberty Alliance for Youth [Missouri]
Long Beach AWARE [New York]
Mental Health Association of NY State (MHANYS)
Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
The Majlis Ash-Shura (Islamic Leadership Council) of New York
Mountain View Prevention Services, Inc. [New York]
Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church [North Carolina]
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD)
Needham Public Health Department [New Hampshire]
New Futures [New Hampshire]
New York Alcohol Policy Alliance
North Carolina Alcohol Policy Alliance
Northland Coalition [Missouri]
Orange Partnership for Alcohol and Drug Free Youth [North Carolina]
Partnership for a Drug-Free New Hampshire
Paso del Norte Alcohol Impact Network [Texas]
Physicians for Social Responsibility (San Francisco Bay Area Chapter)
Pivot - the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Council of Jefferson County [New York]
Plymouth Area Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative [Massachusetts]
Prevention Network [New York]
Project Extra Mile [Nebraska]
Project Hospitality [New York]
Public Citizen
Public Health and Research Center of Korean Community Services of Metropolitan NY
Public Health Association of New York City (PHANYC)
Recovery Advocacy in Saratoga (RAIS) [New York]
Rockland Council on Alcoholism and other Drug Dependence, Inc. [New York]
South Dakota Alcohol Policy Alliance
Staten Island Partnership for Community Wellness [New York]
Tackling Youth Substance Abuse [New York]
Taos Alive [New Mexico]
Texans Standing Tall
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
U.S. Alcohol Policy Alliance
Uri L'Tzedek

YMCA of El Paso [Texas]
Youth with Vision [Missouri]

- ¹ Anderson, P., De Bruijn, A., Angus, K., Gordon, R., & Hastings, G. (2009). Impact of alcohol advertising and media exposure on adolescent alcohol use: A systematic review of longitudinal studies. *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, 44(3), 229-243
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- ² Gordon, R., MacKintosh, A. M., & Moodie, C. (2010). The impact of alcohol marketing on youth drinking behaviour: A two-stage cohort study. *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, 45(5), 470-480
- ³ CDC (2016). 10 leading causes of death by age group – US, 2014 [table]. National Center for Health Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/injury/images/lc-charts/leading_causes_of_death_age_group_2014_1050w760h.gif
- ⁴ Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2015). *Fact Sheet – Underage Drinking*. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/underage-drinking.htm>
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- ⁵ Crews, F. T., Vetreno, R. P., Broadwater, M. A., & Robinson, D. L. (2016). Adolescent alcohol exposure persistently impacts adult neurobiology and behavior. *Pharmacological Reviews*, 68(4), 1074-1109
- ⁶ National Park Service (2016). Director’s Order #21: Philanthropic Partnerships. Retrieved from http://www.eenews.net/assets/2016/03/30/document_gw_08.pdf
- ⁷ United States Department of the Interior (2008). Director’s Order #21: Donations and Fundraising. Retrieved from <https://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/DO21-reissue.pdf>