

THE SOBER TRUTH ON PREVENTING (STOP) UNDERAGE DRINKING ACT

Introduced by: Sens. DeWine and Dodd (S. 2718)

Reps. Roybal-Allard, Wolf, Osborne, Wamp, and DeLauro (H.R. 4888)

In the United States, alcohol is the primary substance of abuse among young people. It is a major contributor to the three leading causes of death among this population – unintentional injuries; homicide; and suicide. We also know that:

- Adults greatly underestimate the extent of alcohol use by youth;
- More youths consume alcoholic beverages than use tobacco or illegal drugs; and
- By the end of high school most students have used alcohol.

American children drink regularly, and they drink in quantities that can be of great, long-term harm to them. We also know that easy access to alcohol is an enormous problem.

- 95% of 12th graders perceive alcohol as readily available to them.
- Most children and underage youth who drink obtain the alcohol from adults or (less frequently) from parents.

The **STOP Underage Drinking Act** includes four major areas of policy development:

► **Establishes Federal Coordination and Reporting (\$2 million)**

- Creates an Interagency Coordinating Committee to coordinate the efforts and expertise, chaired by Secretary of HHS
- Mandates annual report to Congress on their efforts to combat underage drinking
- Mandates an annual “report card” to track efforts in the States

► **Authorizes National Media Campaign against Underage Drinking (\$1 million)**

- Authorizes a national media campaign directed at adults
- Continues Ad Council efforts begun in FY 2004 – yields an estimated \$28 million per year in free media

► **Provides Additional Resources to Prevent Underage Drinking (\$10 million)**

- Provides alcohol-specific enhancement grants through the Drug Free Communities program
- Creates a new program providing competitive grants to states, non-profit entities, and institutions of higher education to create state-wide coalitions to prevent underage drinking and alcohol abuse by college and university students

► **Expands Research, Captures New Surveillance Data on Underage Drinking (\$6 million)**

- Increases federal research and data collection on underage drinking, including:
 - reporting on the types and brands of alcohol that kids consume; and
 - the impact of underage drinking upon adolescent brain development.