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**DRUG FREE MARION COUNTY MONITORS PROPOSED CHANGES
TO INDIANA'S ALCOHOL LAWS
AND
URGES CONCERNED CITIZENS TO ASK STATE LEGISLATORS
TO SAY NO TO SUNDAY AND EXPANDED COLD BEER SALES
AND TO SET RESPONSIBLE QUOTAS
FOR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSES**

As the Indiana General Assembly considers possible changes to alcohol laws – including allowing statewide alcoholic beverage sales on Sundays and the sale of cold beer at grocery and convenience stores, and adjusting the quota system for distributing alcoholic beverage licenses – Drug Free Marion County urges concerned organizations and citizens to let their voices be heard.

DFMC has taken the following positions on these issues:

- **Indiana cannot afford the “convenience” of Sunday alcohol sales and expanded cold beer sales.** Any economic gains made by one segment of the marketplace – if such gains would materialize – would be offset by the economic losses that would occur *on a much greater scale* and *affect a much larger number of individuals* as the result of alcohol-related crashes, law-enforcement costs, social services, medical care, work loss and other issues related to alcohol abuse.
- **Equitable distribution of and responsible limits to alcohol licenses are crucial to maximize economic development without doing harm to our communities and their residents.**

“All of the issues under consideration concern increasing the availability of alcohol – a controlled and regulated substance,” says Nancy Beals, prevention program coordinator for Drug Free Marion County. “Marion County and Indiana cannot handle the social and economic challenges that already exist as a direct result of alcohol abuse. This would only add additional burdens to state and local systems and services struggling to deal with these problems.”

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DFMC research of numerous studies on increased alcohol availability –through Sunday sales, expanded cold beer sales and/or over-density of alcoholic-beverage outlets – shows the following:

- Many studies have established direct correlations between high alcohol availability and increases in drunken driving, sexual assault, crime and violence. The relationship between high crime/violence/underage drinking and alcohol-outlet density is statistically significant regardless of socioeconomic and other demographic factors.
- Even relatively small increases in alcohol availability lead to more consumption and, in turn, to more negative consequences associated with underage drinking, alcohol abuse and alcohol-related fatalities.
- Most studies demonstrate that drinking rates or harmful effects of drinking increase with increased sales times, and decrease when they are shortened.
- A significant body of research has consistently shown that, as availability of and access to alcohol increase through an increase in alcohol outlets, so does the disintegration of a neighborhood's economy and social structure.
- When take-home sales of alcoholic beverages increase, so do instances of drunk-driving-related automobile crashes, and over-concentration of alcohol outlets in a particular area corresponds with a greater number of alcohol-related automobile crashes with injuries.
- Sunday sales of alcohol are linked to a decrease in community involvement. When blue laws are repealed, especially those involving the sale of alcohol, church attendance drops 15 percent, and church donations decrease by 25 percent.
- Over-concentration of alcohol outlets in an area near a college campus leads to increased drinking – including underage and binge drinking – among students.
- Over-concentration of alcohol outlets in a particular area corresponds with an increase in domestic violence and child abuse.

“Proponents of increased availability of alcohol through Sunday sales, expanded cold beer sales and the distribution of alcoholic-beverage licenses tout the ‘convenience’ of these measures,” says Randy Miller, executive director of Drug Free Marion County.

“But the misuse of alcohol creates a significant burden for individuals, families, neighborhoods and city/county/state governments – and such misuse increases when alcohol availability increases. Building an economy around the ‘convenience’ of alcohol is an economic-development policy Indiana and Marion County can not afford.”

Drug Free Marion County urges organizations and individuals who are concerned that state legislators will pass laws increasing the availability of alcohol to contact their representatives and senators, as well as members of the Interim Study Committee on Alcoholic Beverages Issues.

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Committee members are: Rep. Trent VanHaaften (chairperson), Sen. Ron Alting (vice-chairperson), Rep. Scott Pelath, Rep. Phil GiaQuinta, Rep. Matt Bell, Rep. Jack Lutz, Rep. Jackie Walorski, Sen. James Merritt, Sen. John Waterman, Sen. Robert Deig, Sen. James Arnold and Sen. Greg Taylor.

To contact committee members or your state legislators, go to <http://www.in.gov/legislative/legislators/> and follow the links to the House and Senate for email connections. Or call 317-232-9600 or 800-382-9842 for the House of Representatives or (317) 232-9400 or (800) 382-9467 for the Senate.

To identify your state legislators, go to <http://www.in.gov/apps/sos/legislator/search/> or call the numbers above.

For more information on Sunday sales, expanded cold beer sales and the distribution of alcoholic-beverage licenses – including sources for the research information listed above – call Drug Free Marion County at 317-254-2815 or go to www.drugfreemc.org.

Drug Free Marion County, a not-for-profit organization, works to prevent and reduce substance abuse by creating a healthier and safer Marion County through advocacy, education and information with individuals, families, professionals and communities.