

MINUTES OF MEETING  
SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
February 24, 1977

The meeting of this committee was called to order at 9:40 a.m. on the above date by Senator Turnage, Chairman, in Room 415 of the State Capitol Building.

ROLL CALL:

All members of the committee were present except Senator Warden and Senator Roberts who were excused.

WITNESSES PRESENT TO TESTIFY:

Representative Esther Bengtson - District 59, Shepherd  
Senator Chet Blaylock - District 35, Laurel  
Leonard H. Sargent - Executive Director, Montana School Boards Association  
Maurice Hickey - Montana Education Assn.  
Representative Roth - District 10, Big Sandy  
Angela Romain - concerned citizen and college student  
Bob Campbell - Missoula attorney  
Kevin Hunt - chairman, Montanans for Equal Rights  
Chad Smith - Montana School Board Association  
Diana Dowling - Code Commissioner, Legislative Council

CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILLS 28 and 29:

Rep. Bengtson of Shepherd, chief sponsor of these bills, told the committee that H.B. 28 was comprised of changes made to conform with the new Constitution and that H.B. 29 was a constitutional amendment. She introduced Leonard Sargent, executive director of the Montana School Boards Assn., who read a prepared statement to the committee in support of these bills. (See Exhibit 1)

The next proponent was Chad Smith, a Helena attorney representing the Montana School Boards Assn., who said that one of the most important bills in regard to its application to schools is H.B. 28. He further testified that there is no magic to the figure of "18" years except that that is the age at which most children leave high school. He said that, if 18 year olds are allowed to purchase alcohol and if they are in high school, it makes alcohol and beer more easily assessible to younger students. He then said that many laws require different age limits, so that the magic status of "18" is not true, and what is important is that the proper age can be assigned to a particular subject. There is an exception in H.B. 28 for the 18 year olds who work in establishments or stores where they handle alcohol or beer. Mr. Smith said that they feel that H.B. 28 and 29 have great merit and urged that they be concurred in.

Marice Hickey of the Montana Education Assn., was the next proponent, saying that history goes back to April, 1976, when the delegate assembly of the M.E.A. voted in support of raising the drinking age to 19 years.

Rep. Roth of District 10 at Big Sandy was the next proponent to testify. She said she is a co-sponsor of these bills and feels that it will be a step in the right direction to decrease the problem of drinking in high school students. She said that she is particularly worried about the 14 and 15 year olds who obtain it from the 18 year old students because they sometimes become alcoholics and have to be treated at those ages, and any parent who could see these youngsters being treated for alcoholism most certainly would want the problem corrected.

Angela Romain, a concerned citizen and college student, was the next proponent of the bills. She read a prepared statement to the committee. (See Exhibit 2)

There being no more time for the proponents to speak for H.B. 28 and 29, the opponents were allowed to speak. The first opponent was Senator Chet Blaylock of Laurel who told the committee that alcohol does a lot of bad things to people but raising this age will not correct the problem because students in high school always have found a way to get "booze", and they will continue to do so even if the age is raised to 19 years. He further said that students are not allowed to drink during a school day and, if they do, the teachers can "kick them out".

Bob Campbell, a Missoula attorney and former Constitutional Convention delegate was the next opponent of the bill. He handed out several articles to the committee for their consideration. (See Exhibit 3) He said that the 1972 Constitution says that a person over 18 years of age is equal for all purposes, and that if 18 year olds can be in the legislature who should say they cannot drink. Further, he said that the state will have problems if they pass these bills because all through the 1972 Constitution the 18 year olds have consistent rights. He told the committee that in passing these bills they are giving false hope to teachers that the police are going to help them control the students, and the teachers are not now controlling the drinking problem in the schools.

Kevin Hunt, chairman of the Montanans for Equal Rights, was the next opponent. He read a prepared statement to the committee. (See Exhibit 4)

There were many other opponents present who did not testify but were introduced, namely: Lew Autio, Clarice Austin, Gayanne Gutierrez, Connie Erickson, Marsha Metz, Tammy Sherwood, Jim Sutherland. (The last five named were members of a 4-H group visiting the legislature.)

At this time, Rep. Bengtson was allowed to close. She presented the committee with a group of exhibits supporting these bills. (See Exhibit 5) She said that public opinion is that there has to be something done about the problem of drinking in the schools and urged the committee concur in H.B. 28 and 29.

Chairman Turnage allowed the committee to question witnesses. He then thanked the witnesses and told them the bills would be

considered by the committee.

DISPOSITION OF SENATE BILL 125:

Senator Towe moved to reconsider the DO NOT PASS recommendation previously made on this bill by this committee on February 21, 1977. The motion carried unanimously. He then moved to adopt the attached amendments to S.B. 125. The motion carried unanimously. Senator Towe then moved that S.B. 125 as amended DO PASS. The motion carried unanimously. (See attachment #1)

CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL 53:

Diana Dowling, the Code Commissioner of the Legislative Council, representing Rep. Marks who could not be present, explained that this bill was to correct an error in the law.

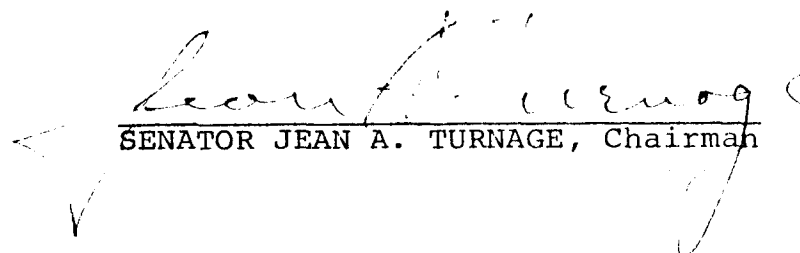
Senator Towe moved that H.B. 53 BE CONCURRED IN. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE BILL 36:

Diana Dowling explained that this bill had been done by a summer law school intern because they had found that laws were not consistent in regard to creed or religion, and they have made that standard now throughout the codes. They also cleared up Title 64 in regard to national origin including ancestry. This bill is just to make laws on discrimination standard.

Senator Towe moved that H.B. 36 BE CONCURRED IN. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business before the committee at this time, the committee adjourned at 10:50 a.m..

  
SENATOR JEAN A. TURNAGE, Chairman

## JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Date 2-24-77

[illegible]

(Attach # 1)

Respectfully report as follows: That.....SENATE..... Bill No.....125...

introduced bill, be amended as follows:

1. Amend title, lines 4 through 10.

Following: "TO"

Strike: lines 4 through 10 in their entirety

Insert: "ELIMINATE"

2. Amend title, line 11.

Following: "REQUIREMENTS"

Insert: "FOR CERTAIN PROFESSIONS AND OCCUPATIONS"

3. Amend title, line 12.

Following: "SECTIONS"

Strike: "66-1934"

Insert: "66-1933"

4. Amend page 1, line 17 through line 4 on page 4.

Following: line 16

Strike: Sections 1 through 8 in their entirety

~~RENUMBER SUBSEQUENT SECTIONS~~

5. Amend page 6, line 25

Following: "fees"

Strike: "-bond required of master plumbers."

6. Amend page 7, section 12, line 23

Following: "Sections"

Strike: "66-1934"

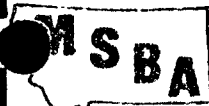
Insert: "66-1933"

(Ex. 1)

501 North Sanders  
Helena, Montana 59601  
Telephone: 406/442-2180

Leonard H. Sargent, Executive Director  
Wayne G. Buchanan, Director of Special Services

# Montana School Boards Association



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COL. GORDON SIMMONS  
2415 Glen Drive  
Missoula, MT 59801

DATE: February 24, 1977  
TO: Judiciary Committee of the Senate

FROM: Leonard H. Sargent, Executive Director  
Montana School Boards Association

SUBJECT: Testimony on House Bills 28 and 29

I would like to express my appreciation to the members of the Judiciary Committee for allowing me to present in written and oral form, testimony in support of House Bills 28 and 29 which would raise the legal age for consumption of alcoholic beverages from 18 years to 19 years of age. I am here as the Executive Director and registered lobbyist of the Montana School Boards Association.

The Governor of the State of Montana and a number of members of the Montana Legislature have indicated that the Legislature must do for the citizens of Montana what they cannot always do for themselves. In this respect the Legislature, through House Bills 28 and 29, can provide an opportunity for the electorate to decide for themselves the most appropriate age for the legal possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages. Lowering what we call the Legal Drinking Age from 21 to 18, has placed a burden on school districts which they neither need nor deserve. Recognizing this fact, the Montana School Boards Association, whose members represent over 90% of the students in Montana's public schools, passed the following resolution at its 1976 State Convention:

**DRINKING AGE PROBLEM** - Whereas, lowering the legal drinking age for school age young adults has created numerous problems for the Montana public community, school districts and parents alike, and

Whereas, minor school age children are adversely affected at an earlier age by their association with drinking legal-age students, and

Whereas, the consumption of alcoholic beverages by legal-age students in off-campus situations during the school day ultimately returns to the school environment as a serious disciplinary problem for

these students and the minor children associated with them, and

Whereas, the presence of alcohol in minor and legal-age mixed student groups involved in extra-curricular activities poses an additional problem for school district authorities, and

Whereas, national statistics highlight the problems created by the lowered legal-age for drinking by school age young adults,

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Montana School Boards Association will seek legislative remedy in 1977 for the school district problems created by the lowered legal-age for drinking, to raise the current legal-age from 18.

It is never easy to deal with the question of legislating human rights and privileges. However, we have over the years determined the age at which young persons may exercise certain rights. We have determined, as best we could, when a person has the physical ability, the mental competency, and the social responsibility to operate a motor vehicle. We have determined at what age they are mature enough to vote, marry, sign contracts, consume alcoholic beverages, etc.. We have granted these rights through the legislative process and we have a duty to amend the statutes and/or the Constitution when it appears to be necessary in the best interests of those young people.

Recognizing that raising the drinking age by one year will not alleviate liquor related problems or the amount of the liquor consumption by teenagers, we still must face the fact that the ready accessibility of intoxicating beverages on our high school campuses is creating a serious problem. We have not just lowered the drinking age to 18 in recent years, we have in essence lowered it to 14 and 15. Eighteen year old students for the most part tend to socialize with young people 2 and 3 years their junior. They tend to socialize less with students 19 through 21. This latter age group has quite often left the community and moved on to full time jobs or institutions of higher learning while the 18 year old remains as a senior in high school and socializes with other members of that institution.

While raising the legal age to 19 may not solve the drinking problem, it would lessen the number of instances when school authorities must take some kind of corrective action because students have brought liquor to school functions and are making it available to younger students. School authorities are being forced to police the activities of students and yet respect their legal rights. This is a difficult situation at best. During the past decade the public schools have been both praised and criticized for the roles they have either chosen or have been forced to assume with regard to the social lives of their students. There is both praise and criticism for the schools' role in teaching values, morality, social behavior and other functions which critics often say are best left to

the family. How to deal with the 18 year old high school student who has the legal right to possess and consume alcoholic beverages and who through the exercise of that right creates serious problems both for the school environment and the community environment, is a burden which school administrators and trustees should not have to carry.

We sincerely urge that this committee will favorably support both of these bills and recommend their passage by the 1977 Montana Legislature and thereby give the citizens of Montana the right to determine the legal age for possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

I appreciate this opportunity to appear before the committee and I pledge the support of our Association for the passage of this legislation.

Thank you.



(E  
EX-2)

*Angela Romain*  
WHAT IS THE OBJECT OF RAISING THE DRINKING AGE TO 19?

(1) The object is not to solve the drinking problem, but to decrease the problem.

A) Over 70% of the students in Montana will turn 18 before they graduate from high school, which means that 70% of the students have the opportunity to drink legally and to contribute to minors. It is because of this drinking statute that much pressure is put on 18 year olds.

B) Drinking has increased immensely (since the 18 year old law came into effect) for 10 to 15 year olds in the lower grades. This is where our real problem lies and this is the problem that we, as responsible legislators, must try to decrease.

Because the drinking age is 18 and because these 18 year olds are still in school, it is very easy for the young people to find buyers. If you raise the drinking age to 19, there will be less students who can obtain alcohol legally; which, in turn, means that younger students will not have as easy access to buyers.

The end result is that younger students will not be drinking as much. The problem with alcohol and young people will have decreased.

Decreasing the problem, not eliminating it, is the object!

The conjunctionary purpose of the bill is to put the question to the electorate and let them decide on the drinking issue. The people will let us know their feelings when they go to the polls to vote, then we will know for sure; which will justify our legislative intent.

SCHOOLS, EDUCATION AND ALCOHOL

on- (1) "Disciplinary problems in the schools."

pro- The 18 year old is on the same level as the teacher and disciplinary problems cannot be avoided. BUT! If the drinking age is raised to 19, disciplinary problems will have less of a tendency to arise, because there are fewer 19 year olds in high school. The time spent with disciplining the problem students should be spent in academic time with worthy students.

on- (2) "Enforcement seems to be the real problem in the schools."

pro- Realize first, if the drinking age is raised to 19, there will be fewer legal aged persons that are able to drink in high school; which in turn means that enforcing rules and regulations will be much easier to accomplish.

on- (3) "Schools have rules and regulations to control the problem."

pro- This is true to some degree, however, are the schools able to deal

effectively with the problem? If you say yes, then if schools are capable of handling the situation, why is there still a problem with alcohol and education? Why are the schools reaching for some sort of help? Why are the school administrations supporting the bill if there is not a problem?

Obviously, there is a problem because alcohol and education simply do not mix and we must try to reduce the accented problem of the 18 year old drinking statute!

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"Raising the drinking age is not going to solve the problem."

This bill is not attempting to solve the problem, but to decrease the problem. There are fewer 19 year olds in high school and this will decrease the amount of contributing to minors, decrease the need for discipline in regard to alcohol and education, and decrease the risks involved if the drinking age is left at 18.

The conjunctionary purpose of the bill is to put the question to your fellow Montanans and let them decide on the drinking issue. The people will let us know how they feel when they come to the polls to vote and then we will know for sure.

"Does raising the drinking age to 18 really make that much difference?"

Yes, there are fewer 19 year olds in high school. Therefore, if alcohol is desired by younger students, these students will have to go outside the high school strata; and finding buyers outside of the high school strata is very hard to do.

"The problem is really within the family."

This is true in many cases; however, if you raise the drinking age to 19, this will aid parents in their struggle to discipline their children.

"You should attack the problem directly."

Since we are unable to attack the problem directly, we must choose the next best alternative; and that alternative is to raise the drinking age to 19, so as to decrease the problem. If we eliminate the opportunity for 18 year olds to obtain alcohol legally, we are attacking the problem as directly as possible.

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"Double Standard" - "Either you are an adult or you are not."

Just because a young person is given the right to vote and serve in the armed forces doesn't automatically give him the right to drink at the same age. A young person can get a driver's license at 16 years of age. This, however, does not give him the right to vote at the same age or serve in the armed forces. Secondly, in states where the drinking age is 21, there seems to be little problem with whether you are an adult or not. Just because you can't drink doesn't mean that you are not an adult. If other states can set the drinking age at 19 or above without any real objection, why can't the state of Montana do the same?

Bob Campbell (Ex 3)

4—The Missoulian, Tuesday, December 28, 1976

## EDITORIAL PAGE — editorials, letters, opinion

# drinking age defended

In 1972 Montana adopted a new constitution and we became the first state to provide in our Bill of Rights a provision granting full 18-year-old adulthood. Their right to vote in all national and state elections was guaranteed by the 26th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which in 1971 was quickly ratified by 34 states in less than six months.

Now a proposal is being made to the Montana Legislature to amend our constitution to make criminal the possession of alcohol by 18-year-olds who would otherwise retain all the other rights of full citizenship.

Since I submitted the original proposal to the Constitutional Convention, I am very much opposed to this suggested amendment because it is an unjustified restriction on those who have capably accepted full adult responsibilities and have been given far more trust and authority in many other areas of our state government.

Consider for a moment the other rights and responsibilities that 18-year-olds now hold:

- They can establish their own home and be responsible in any contract.
- They can be married, raise or

adopt children.

- They can be appointed as guardians over minors.

- They can sit as jurors and decide the life and death issues such as the guilt

### *local comment*

or innocence of accused persons in any criminal trial in the state.

- They can sue or be sued in all courts.

- They can be elected mayor, police judge, or hold any city office.

- They can be elected as a county commissioner, sheriff, justice of the peace, or any other county office.

- They can serve in the House of Representatives and the Montana Senate, where their deliberations affect all who live in our state.

With all these rights and responsibilities it makes no sense to say that a person 18 years of age can make these responsible decisions but does not have the maturity to possess alcohol and accept the adult consequences for any misuse of that right.

The argument that a constitutional

amendment is necessary to maintain order in the schools is simply not valid. The schools have always had the authority to discipline unruly students and this does not change because a few senior students have reached the age of 18. If a student does not comply with the school rules to maintain order, the student can be disciplined or expelled.

Students under 18 are subject to the same school rules but in addition could spend 30 days in jail and be fined \$100 for their possession of alcohol. It is still a crime to provide alcohol to minors, and if school authorities want to rely on the criminal law they can more actively pursue this approach.

Ultimately, better cooperation between the schools and the parents will do more to reduce teen-age drinking than wasting time pushing for a constitutional amendment depriving otherwise full adults from having the equal protection of the laws.

If you agree, please contact your legislators and urge them to vote against this proposed constitutional amendment. — **Robert J. Campbell, Constitutional Convention, Dist. 18, 501 Western Bank Building, Missoula.**

EDITORIAL PAGE—editorials, letters, opinion

# drinking age amendment deserves rejection

Last week the Montana House of Representatives approved a measure to put a 19-year-old drinking age constitutional amendment in front of the voters.

The state's constitution now gives 18-year-olds all adult rights, including that of buying alcoholic beverages.

This is the kind of scissors-and-paste measure many people prefer to use to handle what they see as social or moral problems. If

18-year-old high school students get alcohol and sell it to younger kids, just put a patch over it — make it illegal for the 18-year-olds to buy alcohol.

That step will, as speakers against the proposed constitutional amendment pointed out at a public hearing, solve nothing. Seekers of beer and booze will find them. They did when the drinking age limit was 21. They will if it rises to 19.

There are things that can be done to handle the problem, by those schools which find it a problem. One is to discipline students who procure alcohol for minors and also discipline besotted students, just as any business or government agency will discipline drunken employees.

Another is to handle alcohol on an educational basis. That stuff is potentially more destructive than smoking marijuana. Its dangers can be taught. Banning booze gives it a romantic attraction. Telling the truth about it does not. It is poison to many people. Its poisonous properties deserve explaining.

The legislation now is in the Senate needs the votes of 37 senators to get ballot for a public vote. That's probably more than it can muster.

If it fails that will be good. The tude of the problem of alcohol and not well documented. The case ag 18-year-old drinking age has not been

Nor has the case been made that would improve by raising the age amendment should be rejected for scissors-and-paste approach.

— Reynolds

Not a sample  
Article

MONTANA KIAMIN Jan. 1973

# Opinion

## Don't Raise Drinking Age

Another attempt to raise the drinking age to 19 years of age is now being considered by the Montana Legislature.

Four major educational groups — the Montana Education Association, the Montana School Boards Association, the School Administrators of Montana, and the Montana Association of School Principals support raising the age.

The educational groups are putting all their guns behind this issue. They say the 18-year-olds are not the problem. But the 18-year-olds are supplying the younger kids with liquor, they say.

Ted Lechner, a Billings probation officer, says that 18- to 20-year-olds are

making big bucks selling booze to the younger kids on week-ends.

And some educators are upset because some little kids show up at after-school activities dead drunk.

Educators and everyone else, for that matter, *should* be upset about children and adults abusing alcohol and other drugs.

But raising the drinking age by one year is a poor attempt at a solution to this problem. The problem of how to handle drugs has haunted this society for years.

Educators in this state should be concerned with teaching the facts about drugs, especially alcohol. Making drugs illegal is the lazy way out, and it has been proven, again and again, to be ineffective.

The 18-year-olds are now considered to be adults before the law. If the drinking age is changed, this age group would unfairly straddle a legal fence dividing legal majority and minority.

But more important, when the drinking age was 21, minors had little difficulty getting alcohol and other drugs. So how can the educators

believe raising the age to 19 will do anything at all? Minors would just get alcohol from slightly older sources.

The problem of drug abuse will not be solved by the legal system and the

courts. And as long as educated parents resort only to the legal nothing will change.

Barb

# Why raise drinking age?

The question of raising the legal drinking age to 19 promises to be one of the most emotional issues before the 1977 legislature. No one disputes the fact that there are drinking problems in Montana high schools and even in some junior highs.

But what is the best way to deal with these problems? Proponents of two bills before the legislature think the best way is to make drinking illegal at the high school age and thus remove the temptation and the pressure on students regarding whether they should drink or not.

Unfortunately, the issue isn't so simple. It's complicated by the fact that the entire 18-year-old adulthood question is involved, too. In its 1972 constitution, Montana put a provision in the Declaration of Rights granting full 18-year-old adulthood. That means an 18-year-old can marry and raise or adopt children, be a responsible party in any contract, sit on a jury, sue or be sued in all courts, be elected to city and county offices and to the legislature and legally drink alcohol. The 18-year-old right to vote was guaranteed by the 26th amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Telling Montana's 18-year-olds

they are adults in all respects but drinking is blatant use of a double standard. And the only way to avoid such arbitrary discrimination would be to assure that 18 year-olds legally are not adults for any purpose.

Determining that 18-year-olds are adults except when it comes to drinking alcohol also brings to mind the well-known saying, "Do as I say, not as I do"—for a good number of Montanans older than 18 set nothing but poor examples of drinking behavior for the 18 and under group to follow.

Raising the drinking age to 19 will not solve the teenage drinking problem. It may ease the situation but it treats the symptoms and not the causes. To get to the causes, more innovative thinking about drug abuse—emphasizing alcohol abuse—is needed. And the obvious places for such thinking seem to be in the family and in the school system, starting with grade school and moving right up through high school.

Ultimately, the biggest danger of raising the legal drinking age is that it's a deceptive solution—one that could lead some to think that the student drinking problem is being taken care of, when in fact it isn't.

(Ex 4)

BEFORE THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE, MONTANA  
STATE SENATE

February 24, 1977

Citizen testimony on behalf of recommending 'do not pass'  
on House Bill 29, submitted by J. Kevin Hunt, Montanan's  
For Equal Rights.

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House Bill 29 is an attempt to amend the 1972 Constitution in order to make criminals of 18 year olds who possess alcohol. It is proposed under the guise of protection of youth, but in reality this unfortunate proposal would merely encourage fatal traffic accidents involving teenagers, add to an overburdened judicial system, and create a new class of criminals who would be legally responsible enough to vote, enter into contracts, marry, adopt children, serve as jurors, run for any elective office other than Governor or Attorney General, and sue or be sued in any court - but not possess alcohol.

Passing a Constitutional amendment which would deny 18 year olds the equal protection of the laws would be an ill-advised move, given the existing statutory restraints on alcohol possession and distribution. The irony and absurdity of the amendment is made evident by the notion that a person 18 years of age would be arrested because he would not be considered mature enough to possess alcohol, but would be considered mature enough to be ~~behold~~ arraigned and tried as an adult criminal for that possession.

Prohibition of alcohol in this country failed because violations were so frequent, blatant and widespread in all socio-economic groups, and because the cost of and fallout from enforcement became intolerable.

The question is not whether to drink, but rather, whether to create a new class of criminals. Indeed, the 1976 national youth survey by the federal National Institute of Drug Abuse<sup>1</sup> shows that 85.1% of American youth surveyed views alcohol as an addictive substance, more so than tobacco and marijuana. Why then, is the state's only drug treatment program being phased out? Why is there no ban on advertising which depicts drinking as a youthful activity? Why isn't there a warning on alcohol packaging? Any of these would serve as a better ~~deterrent~~ than a criminal law - a law which ~~would~~ induce 18 year olds to be secretive in their drinking. The fatal auto accidents among youth attributed to this need for secrecy while drinking has haunted our communities for years. It is time that a realistic, non-destructive approach was taken to the problem of alcoholism in all age groups. It is time that we stopped using criminal laws to ruin lives in order to save them.

House Bill 29 should be killed.

J. Kevin Hunt  
Montana Youth Lobby Group  
275 Duniway  
Missoula 59801 Tel. 243-4708

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1 Main Findings, Part I, Non-Medical Use of Psychoactive Substances.  
Response Analysis Corporation, Trenton, New Jersey, RAC 3698B,  
September, 1976.

Available from:

Ms. Mary Carol Kelly  
NIDA Public Information Office  
11400 Rockville Pike



*Bengtson (Ex 5)*

Reasons for increasing the legal age for consuming or possessing alcoholic beverages to 19, or, preferably, to 20 years:

1. There are no major problems in most schools, I believe, with the drinking of 18 year olds during the school day since all students must comply with the rules and regulations regardless of age. The problems develop after school hours during the evenings and week-ends where 18 year old students associate with younger students, quite often in drinking situations
2. Lowering the drinking age to 18 years has, also, increased the drinking of 14 - 15 - 16 year old students. This problem used to be among the 17,18,19 and 20 year olds when the drinking age was 21.
3. Dr. Henry Betts, Chairman of Rehabilitation Medicine at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago says there are more drivers under age 20 involved in accidents than in any other age group. While the accident rate among the population as a whole has dropped 1.6 per cent. What is more, National Safety Council statistics show that nationally, the incidence of drinking in fatal motor vehicle accidents is highest among the 18 - 19 year age group. This has been a dramatic increase nationwide since many states lowered the drinking age.
4. Just because a young person is given the right to vote and serve in the armed forces doesn't automatically give him the right to drink at that same age. A young person can get a driver's license at 16 years of age. This, however does not give him the right to vote at that same age or serve in the armed forces. In my opinion this so-called double standards argument is fallacious.
5. Personally, I would encourage this Committee to consider raising the age for consuming or possessing alcoholic beverages from 18 years to 20 years. It has always been common for former high school students after they graduate to associate with their younger high school friends. It takes about one year for them to get over these strong ties to high school and to their friends still in high school. Many of them are 19 years old and are affecting the drinking patterns of their younger friends.

Therefore, when this Committee considers H.B. 28 and H.B. 29 I would encourage you to look favorably on this increase in age for drinking. However, I would strongly urge you to consider raising the age to 20 years rather than 19 years. You'd be performing a great service to the young people in Montana and this nation, if you did so.

Maynard A. Olson  
206 South Dakota  
Helena, MT 59601

SENATE

JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

BILL 28, 29, 53, 36 VISITORS' REGISTER

DATE 2/24/77

Please note bill no.

(check one)

NAME

REPRESENTING

BILL #

SUPPORT

OPPOS

Lar Antio (not testifying) myself

28+29

✓

Angela Romain

concerned citizen

28+29

✓

\*

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

Jeannine West

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

Mont Parker

MACCY

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

✓

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H

HB 28+29

John H. B. B. B.

visitor 4-H &amp; MACCY

28+29

John H. B. B. B.

4-H &amp; MACCY

28+29

John H. B. B. B.

WHS Muggitt - MACCY

28+29

John H. B. B. B.

Mountains for Equal Rights

28+29

John H. B. B. B.

Mount E. B. B. B.

28+29

John H. B. B. B.

Mount Sch. B. B. B.

28+29

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH SECRETARY

SENATE

COMMITTEE

VISITORS' REGISTER

BILL \_\_\_\_\_

DATE

2/24/77

Please note bill no.

(check one)

NAME

REPRESENTING

BILL #

SUPPORT

OPPOSE

Leonard Sargent

Mont. School Bds. Assn.

28129

X

Charles Frazier

Concerned Citizens

Robert Blaylock

Senate

28129

X

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH SECRETARY