



Put In Your 2¢ Worth...
**About 2¢ a drink yields \$44 million annually
to reduce the impact of
alcohol problems in Missouri.**

Question:

A legislator asks: “When you talk about prevention of alcohol related problems, do you include law enforcement?”

Answer:

Absolutely. When the public hears the word “prevention,” it often assumes that we are talking only about education. It is a false assumption. Education is important, but we are not going to educate ourselves our way out of these problems. Prevention experts take a far more comprehensive approach to public norms, including both informal norms, as found in beliefs and attitudes, and formal norms, as expressed in legislation, regulation, and enforcement.

MISSOURI ALCOHOL IMPACT FACT #21

- Fully a third of the 46 recommendations toward a national strategy made by the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies of Science in its landmark report to Congress, Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility, involve enactment and enforcement of laws and regulations.*
- “Law is a blunt instrument. It is not self-executing and it requires the affirmative support of a substantial proportion of the population and of those who are expected to enforce it.... “
- “A legal norm of this kind, which affects so many people in so many everyday social and economic contexts, cannot be successfully implemented based on deterrence (the threat of punishment) alone. it aims to shape people’s beliefs and attitudes about what is acceptable behavior and thereby draw on their disposition to obey.”
- “ ... state and federal taxes are potentially important instruments for preventing underage drinking and its harmful consequences and for generating revenue to fund a broad prevention strategy. ... Raising these tax rates at both the federal and state level is justified by established principles of public finance, by public health considerations, and by the specific goals of Congress in creating this committee. Of course the amount of any increase is not a scientific question; rather it is a policy question.”
- Missouri’s current beer excise rates are only \$0.06 per gallon, or \$0.006 per 12-ounce beer. We believe that the two-cent-per-drink impact fee proposal is sound public policy, and a relatively painless way to raise much-needed revenue for law enforcement, as well as other prevention strategies, treatment, and support for recovery.

** The National Academies Press, Washington, DC, 2004. Quotes are from Pages 28 and 244.*

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