



Creating safe and healthy communities through the prevention of substance abuse and violence in Washington State

Board of Directors

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Liz Wilhelm
President

Dear Editor:

Jim Cooper
Vice President-
Communications

Recent calls for the privatization of state liquor stores are ignoring important factors in the quest for quick revenue. This is a short term solution with not so hidden pitfalls.

Priscilla Lisicich
Vice President-Advocacy

To even begin to achieve more revenue than the current system, the number of liquor outlets would need to increase dramatically (estimated from 315 to 3,357), thereby increasing the density of outlets in our communities. Greater density is associated with increased alcohol consumption and related harms including medical harms, injury, crime and violence. Where are the figures for these increased costs? Consumption is found to be 5-20 percent less in control states with limited access compared to open states like California.

Inga Manskopf
Secretary

Linda Thompson
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Doug Allen

Long term financial return and public safety are key benefits of the current system. Washington is one of 18 control states, and these 18 states raise more on a per-gallon basis than their counterparts. These profits flow directly to essential state and local government services. On average, control states return about twice the revenue of non-control states.

Denise Fitch

Dixie Grunenfelder

The 12 month compliance rate of the state stores not selling alcohol to minors is among the nation's highest at 94 percent. The private sector compliance rate is 76-84%. There is no incentive for state store employees to sell to minors in order to increase profits. The current system does a better job of protecting our youth.

Ramona Leber

For those who believe auctioning off stores to the highest bidders is the financial solution, this will give the advantage to big box stores and shut out smaller local businesses.

It is tempting for our state to look for a short-term solution to our revenue problem and in the process create long-term issues. This is one time that we, as stakeholders in our children's futures, say: "it ain't broke so don't 'fix' it."

Sincerely,

Liz Wilhelm
President

Jim Cooper
Vice President of Communication

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