

Hi Bob,

I've attached a copy of the study on drunk driving and smoking bans. If you can, please send me a copy of the Kentucky study about dry counties and dui.

Now that I know more about how our alcohol cost calculator is being used in Asheboro's debate about alcohol, I have to say that I think the calculator is being used inappropriately. Here's why:

1. The calculator is intended for employers and only addresses working populations. Therefore, it does not deal with people under the age of 21 or over the age of 65.
2. The cost estimates generated by the calculator or employer-related costs (productivity and health care, for the most part). In debating the costs and benefits of prohibiting alcohol sales, the issue is really social costs (criminal justice, health care, social services).
3. Adding 10 percent to the calculator results to simulate the impact is not an accurate way to estimate the impact of allowing alcohol sales. Ten percent is an arbitrary figure. But the biggest issue is that the consumption rates in the calculator are based on the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH). The NSDUH does not break down to a small town level. So the consumption estimate we have in the calculator is based on national averages. The results of the calculator are not specific to Asheboro and are therefore do not show the effect of being a dry city.

The most likely reality is that people in Asheboro drink about as much now as they would if the town were wet. Having to drive 5 or 20 minutes is not, in my estimation, a significant barrier to alcohol consumption. If anything, being dry may contribute to more alcohol-related accidents because people are driving further to go to bars and restaurants that serve alcohol. Asheboro might be better off allowing alcohol sales while at the same time implementing effective regulations and prevention and treatment programs.

Effective regulations:

- Zoning controls to limit the number and type of outlets (for example: no sales at gas stations, no outlets within x of schools, etc.)
- Server training requirements so that servers know how to card, how to manage patrons intake, etc. (there are lots of programs within the hospitality industry). These programs often include components that teach owners about effective promotions that avoid pushing alcohol (two-for-one drinks, for example), encourage food consumptions, and present non-alcoholic beverages as alternatives.

Prevention and Treatment

- Start a Screening and Brief Intervention program Randolph Hospital:
http://www.ensuringsolutions.org/resources/resources_list.htm?cat_id=2005
- Encourage local employers to pay attention to alcohol-related issues:
http://www.ensuringsolutions.org/resources/resources_show.htm?doc_id=673239&cat_id=964
- Prevent under-age drinking: <http://www.alcoholcostcalculator.org/kids> and http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR403/

I hope this helps. Please call or write if there's anything else I can do. David

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