

California: Marin Institute & others join for statewide ban on self-service alcohol checkouts

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Marin Institute, the alcohol industry watchdog, has joined California State Assemblywoman Fiona Ma (D-San Francisco), Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and other public departments to call for a statewide ban on alcohol sales through self-serve checkout.

Marin Institute executive director and CEO Bruce Lee Livingston said the rise in self-serve checkout lanes in retail stores that sell alcoholic beverages is creating a recipe for disaster.

"Easy access is a key driver of underage drinking, which in turn causes violent crime, car crashes, and high-risk sex," Livingstone added.

According to a research done by San Diego State University Center for Alcohol and Drug Studies last summer, more than 2.3 million underage youth drink alcohol each year in California and these self-checkout machines allowed minors to purchase alcohol without providing age verification.

Underage drinking costs Californian taxpayers an estimated \$8.1bn every year and AB 183 will prevent alcohol from getting in the wrong hands and protects the public and youth Assemblywoman Ma said.

A 2009 UCLA study found 20% of young adults were able to override self-service checkout by scanning other items and/or swiping credit cards. In 2007, underage drinkers consumed nearly 14% of all alcohol sold in California, totaling \$3.6bn in sales.

AB 183 will be heard in the Assembly Committee on Governmental Organization (GO) 13 April 2011, at the State Capitol. Marin Institute is encouraging people to tell Committee Chair Isadore Hall III (D-Compton) to protect the health and safety of California youth and all residents and visitors by passing the bill.