



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Underage Drinkers Beware

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Klein, SLA and Local Merchants Announce Summer Crackdown on Illegal Drinking in the Bronx

State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) and State Liquor Authority officials joined alcohol awareness advocates, members of the NYPD, community leaders, and local merchants at a press conference on Saturday to launch an innovative pilot program aimed at combating illegal underage drinking in the Bronx this summer. At the event, Klein called for passage of his legislation which offers bar owners and workers incentives to attend awareness training programs aimed at stemming the chronic problem of underage drinking.

"As we enter the high season for underage drinking - with proms, graduations, summer festivals, block parties and July fourth right around the corner - we've got to be on alert and ready to take action. By enlisting local bars and restaurants we prevent more minors from being served and together ensure a safer summer for all New Yorkers," said State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Jeffrey D. Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester).

Klein and the Throggs Neck Community Action Partnership (TNCAP) announced the launch of a joint pilot program which calls on all those licensed to serve or sell alcohol in two Bronx zip codes to sign up for a June 18th TIPS training class. The New York State Liquor Authority (SLA) authorizes training courses such as Training for Intervention Procedures (TIPS) and the Alcohol Training Awareness Program (ATAP) to teach those who serve alcohol how to prevent from selling to underage New Yorkers, as well as how to identify and intervene when an intoxicated patron has reached their legal limit.

To announce the program, Klein was joined by NYC Councilmember James Vacca; Frances Maturo, Chairperson of the Throggs Neck Community Action Partnership (TNCAP); Loretta Macknight, Community Planner of TNCAP; Michael Jones, Deputy CEO of the NY State Liquor Authority; Jim McQuade, Economic Development Chair of

Community Board 10; and John Cerini, President of the Throggs Neck Merchant Association.

“Underage drinking is not just about individual teenagers making bad decisions. Our whole community is impacted when young people consume alcohol, whether it’s through vandalism or violence or an unnecessary injury or death. Of course, parents have the ultimate responsibility to stop underage drinking, but our local bars and restaurants can and should do more to make sure they’re part of the solution rather than the problem,” said Councilmember James Vacca.

To encourage and increase participation in the TIPS course, all bar, restaurant, and deli owners who participate in the TIPS course will be entered in a raffle to win an ID scanner (which retails for \$850) for use in their establishment. Klein and TNCAP will also advertise the participants in the program to recognize them as responsible Throggs Neck business owners.

“The Throggs Neck Community Action Partnership is wholly committed to developing awareness of and devising productive solutions to the alcohol and substance abuse problems among youth in our community. We are proud to sponsor this innovative, pilot program with Senator Klein, and we strongly urge all Throggs Neck establishments to sign up for this training,” said Frances Maturo, Chairperson of the Throggs Neck Community Action Partnership (TNCAP).

“As underage drinking far too often results in tragic outcomes, there is no more important priority for the State Liquor Authority than preventing the sale of alcohol to minors. Prevention starts with education, and I commend Senator Klein for launching this important pilot program,” said Michael Jones, Deputy CEO of the NY State Liquor Authority.

Klein's bill (S.5803/NYS Assembly same-as A.8645) would allow the owner of a bar or restaurant establishment to use evidence of participation in a TIPS training class to receive 25% off of a civil penalty resulting from a liquor license revocation or suspension hearing. The bill would also allow a bar owner or server charged with illegally serving underage drinkers to use their TIPS certification as an affirmative defense in a criminal case. The Assembly same-as passed that house earlier this year.

Additionally, Klein has pending legislation (S.1871) that would also help combat illegal underage drinking by extending existing dram shop law to cover those who make and sell fake IDs to anyone under 21 years of age. This means that those who sell fake IDs to minors would be held responsible for an injury or death caused by a minor who got drunk using one of these illegal IDs.