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CONTACT: Jorge Castillo 213 840-3336
Michael Scippa 415 548-0492

Fresno City Council Members and Safety Advocates Come Together to Oppose Dangerously Flawed California SB 930 – the 4 a.m. Bar Bill

FRESNO, CALIFORNIA (August 9, 2022) – Members of the [Fresno City Council](#) joined with health and safety advocates from [Alcohol Justice](#) and the [Friday Night Live Partnership](#) at Fresno City Hall Tuesday to condemn California SB 930. The [“gut & amend” bill](#), authored by Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco) and Assembly Member Mark Haney (D-San Francisco) is the 5th attempt since 2013 to disrupt the protections of California’s statewide uniform last call.

“All previous attempts to disrupt the protections of a uniform statewide 2 a.m. last call have failed and for good reason – it’s a terrible public policy change for California,” stated Cruz Avila, Executive Director of Alcohol Justice. *“Today we are here together, in my home town of Fresno, to say NO to SB 930 and NO WAY to creating a dangerous new class of California late night, bar hopping, impaired commuters.”*

[SB 930](#) would allow closing times for on-sale retailers to be extended from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m. as part of a dangerous “pilot program.” The experiment would take place in 6 cities: San Francisco, Oakland, West Hollywood, Cathedral City, Coachella, and Palm Springs. Fresno was originally the 7th city in the pilot program but requested to be removed from the bill due to intense opposition among Fresno city leaders who will be voting on an opposition resolution on Thursday.

“The effort to keep Fresno bars open until 4 a.m. from 2 a.m. was reckless and dangerous,” said Fresno City Councilmember Gary Bredefeld. *“Our great Fresno Police already have to deal with numerous DUI arrests nearly every day. That’s why several Council colleagues and I are bringing forward a Council resolution on August 11th opposing this stupidity. This bill, SB930, not surprisingly is authored by one of the most left-wing, radical, pro-criminal politicians that exists in Sacramento. Should it pass, our citizens and their families will have a greater chance of being injured or killed due to having more drunk drivers on our roads. That is why I will do everything to make sure this doesn’t happen. Having drinking continue until 4 a.m. will only yield more tragedies on our roads and highways and would be just one more insane policy from Sacramento politicians causing destruction in our community. This bill must be defeated.”*

“The City of Fresno has shown itself to be a leader in developing and upholding policies that put the well-being of its citizens first,” stated Lynne Goodwin, Administrator Friday Night Live Partnership. *“A city council resolution to oppose SB930 will demonstrate this city’s continued commitment to putting the health and welfare of the people first.”*

Public health and safety experts and advocates throughout the state are convinced there is no “local control” when it comes to alcohol because the danger, harms and costs will not stay in the “Pilot Project Cities” where the drinking and economic benefits occur. If the bill becomes law, all surrounding communities of pilot project cities will be threatened by late night drinkers traveling drunk and fatigued in the early morning commute hours.

"We already have a crisis of drunk drivers in Fresno County, said Steve Brandau, District 2 Supervisor Fresno County Board of Supervisors. "Fresno is considered the most dangerous city in California for drunk drivers, and 25th in the entire nation. Extending operating hours so bars can sell alcohol until 4 a.m. is a cocktail recipe for disaster – and a bad fit for Fresno. I am opposed."

According to the [Center for Disease Control](#) (CDC), California currently suffers more annual alcohol-related harm than any other state: 11,000 alcohol-related deaths, \$35 billion in total costs, \$18.5 billion in state costs. The [CDC](#) also identifies maintaining existing last call times as one of the 10 key policies for reducing the harms from reckless drinking and from alcohol-related motor vehicle deaths.

"The juice isn't worth the squeeze," stated Fresno City Councilmember Tyler Maxwell. "We can't afford this in Fresno, from a monetary standpoint and from the lives lost."

Fresno is following actions by the Los Angeles City Council which passed a [resolution of opposition](#) last week, and the powerful Los Angeles County Democratic Party (LACDP) that came out against SB 930 in a recent [letter](#) to Senator Scott Wiener, co-author of SB 930.

"I've talked to our downtown businesses and they don't want 4 a.m., said Fresno Councilmember Miguel Arias (District 3). "It would impose more costs with very little extra revenue being generated. They also know that patrons leaving drunk at 4 a.m. will be running into farm workers on their way to work. This policy doesn't fit in our city, our community. It's just not necessary."

SB 930:

- Is a poorly conceived and inadequately funded pilot project
- Strips away uniform protections of statewide 2 a.m. last call
- Costs the state at least \$3-4 million per year to administer, mitigate the harm, and clean the blood off the highway; costs cities and towns in ["Splash Zones"](#) millions more
- Disregards 40 years of peer-reviewed, public health research on the dangers of extending last call
- Ignores the existing annual catastrophe of alcohol-related harm in California
- Uses the false narrative of COVID economic recovery to subsidize and reward late-night alcohol-sellers at government and tax-payer expense

"Fresno leaders are absolutely using power in the right way," stated Carson Benowitz-Fredericks, MSPH, CHES, Research Director, Alcohol Justice. "As a public health expert, I would argue they are using power in the only right way—to protect the residents of this city from reckless, short-sighted, science-denying policies promoted by politicians who would tip the rest of the state off the cliff just to enjoy the drunken view from 4 a.m. Now, let's stand up for every community in this state and use every bit of power we have to stop SB 930."

Alcohol Justice encourages the public to TAKE ACTION to STOP SB 930: Text JUSTICE to 313131 or visit: <https://alcoholjustice.org/take-action/stop-sb-930-no-late-last-calls-in-ca-not-now-not-ever>



Fresno City Councilmembers Miguel Arias, Gary Bredefeld and Tyler Maxwell



Alcohol Justice Executive Director Cruz Avila



Alcohol Justice Research Director Carson Benowitz-Fredericks



Friday Night Live Partnership Administrator Lynne Goodwin