



Reppin' with your Rep

Elected officials make a lot of decisions about important things in our cities, towns and state. That's why it's so important to talk with them and share what we know about health and safety. Armed with that information, they are more likely to make decisions that help us all to live longer, safer and healthier lives!

Call them up!

Calling a politician isn't as scary as it might seem; besides you'll probably either talk with an aide or leave a message. No sweat, right? Politicians care about their voting public--just a few people voicing their concerns has been known to sway their votes!

When contacting your elected officials (city council, county commissioners, school board, representatives, senators, etc.), be sure to have your facts straight and your talking points ready. These should be written beforehand and available to you on paper before you pick up the phone. And practice with a friend before you call! It might feel funny but it helps!

Friend them!

"Like" your elected officials on Facebook...and let them know what you think. Even politicians check their Facebook and Twitter accounts! Share your comments, facts, and even pictures with your local policymakers and get your opinions heard. You can also send them a message by email or the post office.

Knock on their doors. Pay them a visit in their own office.

Schedule a time to pop in and meet with representatives and senators in your community. They usually have an office in Raleigh at the General Assembly and one closer to your home town. This is known as an office "in the district". Face-to-face visits will let them know you mean business! This is also a great time to express your gratitude for their support of the needs of your community. Be sure to call their Legislative Assistant to offer when and where you can meet. Find the numbers online to make an appointment. Also, **don't forget to ask for what it is you want.** There needs to be firm asks made of them or the meeting was just for fun. At some point during the meeting you can ask, "Can we expect your support to get the NC ABC Commission to properly classify alcopops?"

And always thank them for service!

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Sample Script

Take some time to fill this out using your name and contact information (you can even enter in a personal story about the issue effects you, your family, neighbors or friends) then keep it nearby when you call your legislators or send it to them as a message. If calling, don't forget to practice saying it out loud a few times so you're prepared!

Hello Senator/Representative _____,

My name is _____ and I am a teen advocate for _____. I live in _____ County and attend _____ High School.

I am very concerned about alcopops in my community and want you to know that they are a product that is an important factor in underage drinking.

Alcopops are flavored alcohol beverages that contain liquor, are usually high in alcohol content, and disguise the taste of alcohol. They are often marketed in ways that get them confused with juice, soda or energy drinks. Despite North Carolina's laws regarding how a liquor is classified, our state sells these products as a malt beverage making them very accessible to youth.

According to a Monitoring the Future Study, of the 8th graders that did drink, 78% of those beverages were alcopops. Of 12th graders that consumed alcohol, 65% of those beverages were alcopops. So you can see, that they are a starter drink for youth and are attracting young consumers.

I would like you to support the NC ABC Commission in classifying alcopops properly. This would mean they would be sold and taxed as other liquors are.

This is a serious issue that does not require new legislation. It merely requires support of current laws that dictate that this product be sold as a liquor rather than a malt beverage.

You can contact me at _____@email.com. Thank you for your time.