

## SAMPLE LETTER

Date

The Honorable John Doe  
Virginia State Senate  
910 Capitol Street  
Richmond, VA 2319

Dear Senator Doe:

I am writing to ask your support for S.B. 195, a bill that would change state law and remove the exemption that allows youth under age 21 to possess alcohol for employment purposes. In series of reports in 1991, the Surgeon General of the U.S. called these provisions “loopholes” and urged states to change them.

Underage drinking is the nation’s No. 1 drug problem. It kills more than six times as many young people as all other illicit drugs combined. Yet society often condones alcohol use by those under the legal drinking age of 21 as an accepted “rite of passage.”

Virginia is sending youth the wrong message. Underage drinking continues to be a serious problem in our state. According to the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles in 1997, 29 teens age 15-19 died in alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes and 1,162 were injured. (Include your own state’s underage drinking facts gathered through the needs assessment process.)

As you may know, our own community of \_\_\_\_\_ has suffered the serious consequences of an alcohol-related motor vehicle crash. Just two months ago, two of our teens died because they were drinking and driving. The \_\_\_\_\_ Coalition has brought together all segments of the community—youth, parents, law enforcement, educators, the media, the medical and business communities—to develop a comprehensive plan to deal with this problem.

Comprehensive community programs have been successful, but we need your help in strengthening our underage drinking laws. We need to make it clear to our youth that underage drinking is illegal, unhealthy and unacceptable. We hope you agree and will support S.B. 195. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing your views on this issue.

Sincerely,

Jane Smith  
Executive Director  
The \_\_\_\_\_ Coalition  
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