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From: James Wagner
Sent: Tuesday, April 01, 2003 9:50 AM
Subject: Malt bev Proposal

Please put the weight of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms behind firm regulation of products like Jack Daniels Hard Cola, Smirnoff Ice, Mike's Hard Lemonade and other "alcho-pop" ready-to-use alcohol drinks.

Hiding behind the more lenient regulations for malt beverages (like beer), alcohol manufacturers are getting away with tricking us and our kids with their thinly-disguised spiked soda-pop. The names of these flavored alcohol drinks suggest they're like soda while encouraging kids to identify with brand names of bourbon. Liquor companies say they're "malt beverages" but surveys show that kids think they're hard liquor. Unlike hard liquor, "hard" soft drinks are marketed heavily on TV and sold in grocery and convenience stores.

Kids are exposed to more ads for these "alcho-pops" than any other group and kids are the most vulnerable to becoming problem drinkers and alcoholics. For example, young adults consume 80 percent of their alcohol in binges - 5 or more drinks in one sitting - compared to 43 percent overall. (TK Greenfield & JD Rogers, Journal of Alcohol Studies, Jan.1999) Already, junior and senior high students drink over a billion cans of beer annually, equaling \$500 million in alcohol industry revenue (US DHHS report, June 1991).

A person who becomes a heavy drinker during adolescence is far more likely to become a problem drinker or become addicted to alcohol.

Please keep these facts in mind when regulating alcoholic products aimed at our children. For the sake of our children, our families, and our country's public health, we urge BATF to not let alcohol manufacturers get away with their marketing shell game. Get alcho-pops off the airwaves and off the shelves of our neighborhood food stores.

Sincerely,

James Wagner

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