

## Molly Wingrove

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**From:** Michigan Alcohol Policy <michiganalcoholpolicy@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 3, 2020 6:33 AM  
**To:** Rep. Michael Webber (District 45); Rep. Ryan Berman (District 39); Rep. Kathy Crawford (District 38); Rep. Diana Farrington (District 30); Rep. Ben Frederick (District 85); Rep. Missy Hoytenga (District 102); Rep. Graham Filler (District 93); Rep. Matt Hall (District 63); Rep. Pauline Wendzel (District 79); Rep. John Chirkun (District 22); Rep. Frank Liberati (District 13); Rep. Sara Cambensy (District 109); Rep. Jewell Jones (District 11); Rep. Alex Garza (District 12); Rep. Cynthia Neeley (District 34)  
**Cc:** Molly Wingrove  
**Subject:** Concerns regarding HB 5781  
**Attachments:** Excessive\_Alcohol\_Consumption\_Costs\_MI\_2010\_610374\_7 (1).pdf

Good morning Chairman Webber and Members of the Regulatory Reform Committee,

I am concerned that HB 5781 is not in the best interests for most people in Michigan. Michigan already ranks 12th in the nation on binge drinking for adults and is higher than the national average. For every person in Michigan, the economic cost of excessive alcohol consumption is \$826 and yet we continue to not address this issue (see attachment).

Additionally, there is good reason to not loosen rules, regulations, and laws around drinking alcohol during the midst of this pandemic. Below is what the World Health Organization has to say about alcohol and COVID-19.

*Alcohol consumption is associated with a range of communicable and noncommunicable diseases and mental health disorders, which can make a person more vulnerable to COVID-19. In particular, alcohol compromises the body's immune system and increases the risk of adverse health outcomes. Therefore, people should minimize their alcohol consumption at any time, and particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

Reading this information we as a state should be cautious about expanding alcohol access and availability and about promoting drinking more.

My main concerns about establishing common drinking areas are the following:

- the potential negative impact on our children. Already many communities have fairs and festivals that showcase people drinking. In addition, more and more places are selling alcohol (gas stations, tastings in grocery stores, movie theaters farmers markets, etc...). By all of this drinking going on in front of children it helps to normalize this behavior.
- the potential negative impact on people struggling with addiction from alcohol. Again, there are fewer places where people are not exposed to drinking. Now a person can't walk in a grocery store, go to a farmers market, go to a movie, now potentially walk down the street without being offered a drink.
- By establishing common drinking areas, it will be less likely for a server to notice someone drinking too much because the patron may leave the premises and then there is no one assigned to monitor how much alcohol the patron is being served.
- And related to the last point, if a patron leaves an establishment and enters into the "common drinking area," who will be monitoring this person to ensure that drinks are not shared with people that are underage?
- I also believe that these common areas will use up more of a communities already limited law enforcement resources.

For these reasons Michigan Alcohol Policy Promoting Health and Safety is opposed to HB 5781.

**Thank you for hearing my concerns and I urge all of you to not vote for this bill.**

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me.

Sincerely,

Mike Tobias  
517.803.5586