

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No. 394

Approved October 3, 2017

WHEREAS, Dating back to mid-August, there has been a shocking number of underage drinking and other alcohol-related arrests in the Elmhurst and Mount Pleasant neighborhoods, the vast majority of which have involved students at local colleges and universities; and

WHEREAS, During the first weekend in September, according to WPRI, 14 individuals were charged with alcohol related crimes, including underage drinking, possession of alcoholic beverages on a public street, and disorderly conduct, following an off-campus party in the Elmhurst neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, On September 14, 2017, according to the Providence Journal, nine college students were arrested for underage drinking in three separate incidents in just one day; and

WHEREAS, In 2007, the United States Surgeon General released a “Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking,” which stated that, “The short- and long-term consequences that arise from underage alcohol consumption are astonishing in their range and magnitude, affecting adolescents, the people around them, and society as a whole”; and

WHEREAS, Moreover, the Surgeon General’s “Call to Action” explains that underage drinking, “Creates secondhand effects that can put others at risk. Loud and unruly behavior, property destruction, unintentional injuries, violence, and even death because of underage alcohol use afflict innocent parties. For example, about 45 percent of people who die in crashes involving a drinking driver under the age of 21 are people other than the driver [...] Such secondhand effects often strike at random, making underage alcohol use truly everybody's problem” and

WHEREAS, According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), alcohol is a factor in the deaths of 4,358 people under age 21 each year; and

WHEREAS, According to a report from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), underage drinking contributes to nearly 220,000 emergency room visits each year; and

WHEREAS, According to the Office of the Surgeon General, underage drinking is increases the risk of physical and sexual assault, is associated with academic failure and illicit drug use, causes alterations in the structure and function of the young people’s brains, and is a risk factor for heavy drinking later in life; and

WHEREAS, Public consumption of alcohol is a particularly egregious form of alcohol-related crime, as it is closely associated with other crimes, such as disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, and public urination, it immediately and negatively impacts nearby residents and, if it goes unchecked, creates a culture of contempt for alcohol restrictions in general; and

WHEREAS, To properly address the problem of underage drinking, public consumption of alcohol, and other alcohol-related crimes, the City needs the cooperation and support of the colleges and universities many of the underage drinkers attend; and

WHEREAS, Open lines of communication and coordinated strategies between the Providence Police Department and the colleges and universities are vital to solving the issue of alcohol-related crimes; and

WHEREAS, According to the Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention, to reduce alcohol-related problems on campus and in the surrounding community, colleges and universities should implement and consistently enforce policies such as prohibiting alcohol use on campus, holding students accountable within the campus judicial system for off-campus alcohol-related arrests and convictions, and notifying parents of underage students found drinking; and

WHEREAS, In order to reduce underage drinking, public alcohol consumption, and issues related to alcohol, many colleges and universities around the nation have adopted "Zero Tolerance" policies for alcohol-related crimes.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the City Council of the City of Providence does hereby call upon the colleges and universities located in Providence to enact "Zero Tolerance" policies for underage drinking and public consumption of alcohol among their students, establish clear and firm definitions of "Zero Tolerance," and forward copies of all such policies to the Chief of the Providence Police Department no later than October 31st, 2017.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That, upon passage, copies of this resolution be sent to the offices of the respective presidents of Brown University, Bryant University, Johnson and Wales University, Providence College, Rhode Island College, and the Rhode Island School of Design.

IN CITY COUNCIL

SEP 26 2017

READ AND PASSED

Sabrina Mats

ACTING PRES.
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CLERK

I HEREBY APPROVE.

[Signature]

Mayor
Date: 10/3/17