



The Extra Mile

Advocating for evidence-based policies and practices to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms

Cocktails-to-go and Sales in a Vehicle Bills Introduced Research indicates these policies will increase harms across Nebraska

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, states have relaxed several alcohol regulations to assist struggling bars and restaurants. A national push is underway to make these temporary changes permanent and secure long-term industry profits with little regard for the public's health and safety.

On March 19, Governor Ricketts temporarily authorized restaurants and bars to [sell alcohol on drive-through or curbside orders without customers leaving their vehicles](#), which is normally not permitted under state law. One week later, [a second Executive Order](#) (E.O.) was issued, giving them the ability to provide takeout for cocktails and other alcoholic beverages as long as they have a sealed lid.

Legislation has been introduced to make both temporary orders permanent despite COVID-19 preventing the General Affairs Committee from holding an interim hearing this past summer in order to weigh the pros and cons of such action. Adopting these measures permanently will significantly increase alcohol access and availability, leading to a variety of health and social problems, as Executive Director Chris Wagner summarized in a recent [Lincoln Journal Star op-ed](#).

[LB 72](#) was introduced to permanently allow the sale of mixed drinks and cocktails-to-go by Class C and I license holders. It specifies that businesses with a Class I liquor license (restaurants with on-site consumption only) must also sell food with the drink. The drinks must be in sealed, tamper-proof containers and transported in the trunk of the vehicle, which may not always be feasible due to the nature of many of the drink containers (see below).



Examples of cocktails-to-go in the Omaha metro area

[LB 295](#) repeals the current statute on alcohol sales within a motor vehicle. States like Nebraska have implemented restrictions on the sale of alcohol concurrent with driving. According to a National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine report, these laws are considered common-sense measures to reduce drunk driving and other alcohol-related harms. A [study in New Mexico](#) found that the odds of drinking in the vehicle before arrest were significantly higher for drive-up window users than for offenders who purchased package liquor elsewhere.

Hearings for the following alcohol-related bills (except LB 271) are scheduled for February 8th:

- [LB 80](#) – cuts shipping license fees in half, as requested by the Liquor Control Commission (LCC), to promote more direct shipping business in Nebraska.
- [LB 271](#) – creates a statewide 24/7 Sobriety Program and allows pre-trial diversion for first-time non-aggravated (0.08 to 0.149 BAC) DUI offenses.
- [LB 274](#) – creates an annual special designated license for craft breweries, farm wineries, and micro-distilleries to use for farmer's markets.
- [LB 311](#) and [LB 415](#) – increases the annual production cap for micro-distilleries from 10,000 to 100,000 gallons.
- [LB 578](#) – defines ready-to-drink (RTD) cocktails in statute and sets the excise tax at that of beer, or \$0.31/gallon, rather than the current rate of distilled spirits at \$3.75/gallon.

Due to COVID-19, the Legislature has [modified the ways in which testimony and public opinion can be communicated](#) with policymakers. Please consult the link provided for additional information. To view Project Extra Mile's legislative tracking sheet, click [here](#).

Omaha Area Law Enforcement Net Over 100 Drunk Driving Arrests During the Holidays

Heightened enforcement efforts keep communities safe from impaired drivers

In December, law enforcement agencies throughout Nebraska [focused additional resources on preventing drunk driving](#) and enforcing other alcohol laws. The operations were supported by the Nebraska Department of



Transportation Highway Safety Office (NDOT-HSO) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). In the Omaha Metro, law enforcement agencies accrued at least 109 driving under the influence arrests, 20 minor in possession of alcohol citations, and 23 open container violations.

[Read more](#)

USDA and HHS Ignore Recommendation of Advisory Committee

Alcohol industry flexes on evidence again



In December, the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services announced the [2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). The new guidelines ignored a key recommendation following the Dietary Guidelines Advisory (DGA) Committee's review of scientific evidence and advice to lower suggested alcohol intake

limits for men to no more than one drink per day on days when alcohol is consumed.

At their meeting in June 2020, members of the DGA Committee announced new recommendations to the current alcohol consumption guidance, advising both men and women to limit daily use to a single serving of beer, wine, or liquor. The group found that consuming two drinks per day for men is associated with a "modest but meaningful increase" in death rates due to all causes.

[Learn more](#)

Alcohol Accounts for More than 18,000 Cancer Deaths in the US

New research says state-level policies needed to reduce burden of disease

New research indicates that alcohol use accounts for a significant share of cancer incidence and mortality in the United States. [In Nebraska, alcohol contributed to over 400 cases and 101 deaths](#), according to the study. On average, 4.8% of cancer cases and 3.2% of cancer deaths, or about 75,200 cancer cases and 18,950 cancer deaths annually in the U.S., were due to alcohol from 2013 to 2016.

[Learn more](#)

The Sobering Truth: Incentivizing Alcohol Death and Disability

Economic incentives given to the alcohol industry harm public health and safety



A new report released by Vital Strategies, [*The Sobering Truth: Incentivizing Alcohol Death and Disability*](#), is the first to provide a comprehensive overview of the negative impacts of economic incentives given to the alcohol industry. Alcohol use contributes to 3 million global deaths each year and leads to significant injury, suffering, and disability.

An example included within the report summarizes the recent federal tax cut for alcohol producers in the United States. Between 2017 and 2020, Congress passed legislation to reduce alcohol excise taxes, reducing total tax revenues by \$5.4 billion. These cuts were never intended to become permanent – they were initially introduced for

two years and were extended in late 2019. The alcohol industry lobbied extensively to make them permanent in 2020.

"It is, therefore, utterly mind-boggling, given the huge toll of death and disability, that high-level global development agencies would incentivize countries to give financial breaks to the perpetrator—the alcohol industry—under the guise of development assistance. How can we square off the benefit of development assistance with the loss of 3 million lives a year and long-term destruction of health and mental well-being?"

-José Luis Castro, President and CEO Vital Strategies

Mark Your Calendar

Coalition to meet on February 10

The coalition will meet on **February 10 at 9 a.m.** Please join us for a panel discussion on the impact of drunk driving in Douglas and Sarpy Counties. Speakers will share their perspectives on prevention strategies and current penalties to effectively address impaired driving throughout the state.

In 2019, there were 6,412 DUI arrests in Nebraska. There have been 707 alcohol-related traffic fatalities in the state between 2010 and 2019.

The coalition meets each month via [Zoom](#). For more information and to receive future meeting invitations,



please contact Project Extra Mile at
info@projectextramile.org.

Omaha Metro Coalition Meeting

Wednesday, February 10, 2021
9:00 a.m.

Please join us **VIRTUALLY** for our
coalition meeting being held via Zoom.
we will have a

Panel Discussion on DUIs

Thank you for your involvement!

Jennifer Pollock
Jennifer Pollock, Coalition Chair

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/96988873966>

Meeting ID: 969 8887 3966

Password: 12345

For more information:

(402) 963-9047

www.projectextramile.org

info@projectextramile.org

