

Legislators, not sober drivers, are ones with impaired judgment

By Sheri Conover Sharlow, Libertarian Writers' Bureau

Legislators, not sober drivers, are ones with impaired judgment by Sheri Conover Sharlow, Libertarian Writers' Bureau

Open-container bill wouldn't make roads safer, but it would make life more difficult for drivers

--

It's a good thing that the current open-container bill wasn't law when I was a newspaper reporter. One of our photographers could have unwittingly broken the law as we covered a story.

We joined two hilarious volunteers, a lawyer and a funeral-home director, for the city-wide cleanup. Their mission: To become real garbagemen. They debated what to do with goopy trash bags they dubbed radioactive ("Real garbagemen aren't afraid of nuclear waste.") They poked fun at other volunteers ("Real garbagemen don't have clean gloves.")

Soon, their truck was heaping with trash. Then they saw another bag.

"Real garbagemen don't drive past garbage," the passenger told the driver.

The passenger jumped out of the truck and grabbed the bag. He couldn't wedge it into the truck bed, so he opened the car door of the photographer who was following them. He tossed the bag on her front-seat floor.

Under the open-container bill – House Bill 1057 – if there was just one empty beer can or bourbon bottle inside that bag, she could be ticketed.

It doesn't matter that she was sober. It doesn't matter that someone else put the bag there without her consent. It doesn't matter that she didn't know the bag's contents. It doesn't matter that she was hauling away litter. It doesn't matter that her employer would have been tougher than any officer if she had been drinking while she was working.

All that matters under this bill is if there's an open alcohol container in the passenger compartment.

Once again, our legislature is leading us into the Land of Unintended Consequences because it lacks the sense and the guts to do the right thing, which is nothing.

Too bad. They had been holding firmly against this legislation long sought by the federal government.

The federal government has extorted Hoosiers to the tune of \$20 million a year of highway taxes that our drivers have paid, just because it doesn't like Indiana's highway law. Never mind that pesky 10th Amendment, which says that powers not specifically designated by the U.S. Constitution belong to the states.

The Indiana General Assembly should have learned from its recent tour to the Land of Unintended Consequences. A law that was passed in 2001 and went into effect this January required all food-serving establishments to employ licensed food handlers.

It inadvertently banned potlucks at churches and other nonprofits. Why, Indiana can't have those dangerous church ladies making gooseberry pies or corn pudding or potato salad without state approval, even if grieving families openly appreciated having a nice meal after funerals.

Oops.

Back to HB 1057.

Like other alcohol laws, it clearly will have some bizarre inconsistencies. Under current liquor laws, you can't buy carry-out non-alcoholic beer on Sundays, even though you can't get even a minor buzz off it, yet you can buy all the 50-proof Nyquil you want. Or 28.6-proof Scope. Or 70-proof vanilla extract. (For comparison, domestic beers are 10-14 proof and domestic wines are 24-28 proof.)

I don't want blue laws to ban such purchases. But this shows how current laws don't make sense.

Surely harmless non-alcoholic beer will be part of this bill because, jeepers, a police officer looking from a distance can't tell a green O'Doul's bottle from a green Becks bottle.

Why don't they go all the way with the law? If you have an open Scope bottle, you're toast. Better keep that vanilla in the trunk. And no tolerance for a cup of orange juice, either. If the orange juice in your refrigerator was opened three days ago, it has more alcohol than a bottle of O'Doul's.

This bill would punish recyclers, who reduce the load on our landfills, pick up litter and support nonprofits, such as the Muncie animal shelter.

Collectors hauling their goods to the flea market could face fines for cans and bottles that have been empty so long that the drinker has been dead for decades. Caterers (or parents of the bride and groom) would not be able to choose where in the van to put the half-used bottles left from a wedding reception.

The problem isn't with alcohol containers.

The first problem is unsafe drivers. (Ironically, drunk drivers will drive past police officers ticketing sober drivers.)

The other problem is with legislators who pass laws without thinking about the consequences. Their judgment is clearly impaired. They're the ones who deserve a citation.

<http://www.writersbureau.org>

Ten Ways to Make It Through the Holidays Sober

By nne Dibala, M.D., The Recovery Coach™

Ten Ways to Make It Through the Holidays Sober by nne Dibala, M.D., The Recovery Coach™

1. Plan to stay sober.

Every day plan to stay sober and work your plan.

2. Have a support system.

If you're going to a party where you know there will be alcoholic beverages served, and you're afraid you may be tempted to drink, bring a buddy who encourages you to stay sober.

3. Associate with people who know you are trying to stay sober and want you to stay sober.

4. Avoid the "cues" to your old drinking habits.

If you always drink at Joe's Bar, there's no need to go there just to meet with your old friends.

5. Be careful about drinking from punch bowls.

It's always safer to drink a beverage when you get it directly poured from the container.

6. Get enough rest.

At this time of year, many of us over-commit. If you're stressed out, you are more vulnerable and may feel entitled to have "just one."

7. Maintain good nutrition, and stay hydrated.

You'll be less likely to binge out on food and alcohol.

8. Talk to friends you know who are sober and don't drink, and ask for tips on how they do it.

9. If you live alone, don't keep alcohol in your house.

If alcohol is not in your house, it will be at least harder to get.

10. If you had a favorite chair where you always drank, consider giving yourself a holiday present and replace the chair, or change the covering.

The same goes if you had a favorite drinking glass. Get rid of the old reminders.

Bottom line: Plan for a sober holiday, and follow through with all the supports you can get. Remember, there are people who do not drink alcohol at holiday functions -- you probably weren't aware of them! People are more concerned about what's in their glass, than in what's in yours.

©Anne Dibala, M.D., The Recovery Coach™, <http://www.responsiblerecovery.com> . We are a group of credentialed, experienced professionals who want to help you overcome your barriers to a richer, fuller life. We tailor programs to your personal needs, utilizing resources from the fields of coaching, mental health, wellness medicine, psychology, and addiction recovery. HOPE + HELP + ACTION = RESULTS.
Mailto:TheGrowthCoach@responsiblerecovery.com .

Related eBooks:

[Ten Ways to Make It Through the Holidays Sober](#)
[Sober up! Fast-spreading Sober.i virus spotted by BitDefender Labs](#)
[Anger And Your Driving](#)
[Hunting Whitetail Deer Using Deer Drives](#)
[Tractor Trailer Truck Driver Fatigue](#)

Get more Free PDF eBooks at FreePDFeBooks.com

Related Products:

[Web Copywriting Tune-Up Kit](#)
[62 Ways To Beat The Gas Pump Monster](#)
[Proven Pricing Secrets](#)

Malamaal.com: A genuine resource center for Quality Ebooks and Softwares

Co-Sponsored Advertisement:

This PDF eBook is for free Distribution only, it cannot be SOLD
An online Community Services Directory for the Mid-Columbia River Gorge

[Click here to know more](#)

Powered By FreePDFeBooks.com

[ReBrand this PDF eBook with your Name / URL / ClickBank Affiliate ID for Free](#)