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May 10, 2011

Dear Parents:

First, let me congratulate you, your family, and especially your children as they are honored as part of the graduating high school Class of 2011. It is a long road to graduation and everyone should be extremely proud that your child has reached this milestone in his or her educational journey. While such an achievement deserves great celebration, it is important to remember that these celebrations need to be conducted in a manner that is both safe and legal.

It is an all too often heard misconception that parents may legally sponsor a "drinking party" for their child and his/her under-aged friends. This is not accurate.

IT IS NEVER LEGAL FOR ANY ADULT TO PROVIDE ALCOHOL TO SOMEONE ELSE'S CHILD EVEN WITH THE PERMISSION OF THAT CHILD'S PARENT.

The providing host can be charged with Unlawfully Dealing with a Child in the First Degree, a class A misdemeanor. The punishment for each separate charge could be:

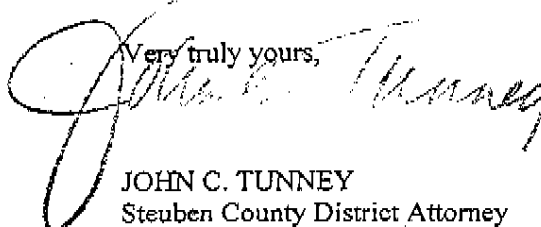
- Up to one year in jail
- Up to three years probation
- Up to \$1000 fine plus \$165 in court surcharges

These are only the Criminal Law sanctions that may be imposed. Civil liability may also exist for the consequences which result from providing alcohol or a place to consume it, to an underage person.

If you, or your child, are contemplating a graduation party with under-aged drinking, please reconsider. No one wants to be the parent who is awakened in the middle of the night to be informed that his or her child has been injured or killed in a drunk driving accident. And no one wants to be the host of the party who is held responsible, either criminally or civilly, for a drunk driving tragedy. **One night of revelry is not worth a lifetime of regret.**

This is a time of year for great anticipation and joy and the men and women of the District Attorney's Office and the Steuben County Task Force on Underage Drinking want everyone to be safe, happy and healthy so that we can joyously celebrate the accomplishments of our young adults. I wish everyone the best and hope you all have a great summer.

Very truly yours,



JOHN C. TUNNEY
 Steuben County District Attorney



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