

MBEC PROPOSED LEGISLATION: THE TALKING POINTS

Ever since 1998, after we sought and helped pass enabling legislation, the Kentucky Beer Wholesalers Association, its' respective members, and others involved in distributing malt beverages in the Commonwealth of Kentucky have donated monies to help fund Project Prom and Project Graduation programs throughout Kentucky.

We have done this by and through an organization known as the Malt Beverage Education Corporation, which was established with two major purposes in mind:

Education about the dangers associated with under-age drinking...

And,

Providing funds to help coordinate and produce meaningful programs aimed at prevention and elimination of underage drinking.

By virtue of this legislation, for every dollar we — at MBEC — raise privately, the State matches with an annual contribution from the tax collected on the sale of our products. The combination and cooperation of this true private-public partnership has enabled many organizations to promote, and produce programs aimed at preventing and eliminating underage drinking in our Commonwealth, and has helped thousands of our youth to enjoy meaningful times in their lives in safe and happy environments.

Since our inception, over 23 years ago, we have now donated nearly \$2 million to high schools to help fund Project Prom and Project Graduation programs alone.

We have also funded nearly \$100,000 in grants, and over \$110,000 in “mentoring” programs.

The KBWA – and its' members – are now asking you for your help in “Modernizing” this essential and vital program and help give the MBEC Board more flexibility in how to utilize these funds in more meaningful and potential life-changing ways.

If this legislative proposal were to pass, it would do these things:

- 1) In addition to just Project Graduation and Project Prom, this new proposal would allow some of the donated and matching funds to be spent on scholarships for college and technical school students who have demonstrated an interest in working for a licensed distributor and a contributor to the program. These persons – if approved -- would be allowed to receive a stipend to further their education, while, at the same time, get an opportunity to expand their interests in “real time” and “real job” opportunities that have the potential of folding into potential career paths.
- 2) These scholarship dollars could be aimed at creating diversity in the business community and for students who are interested in career opportunities that have been previously

prohibited by archaic and out-of-date laws. At this time, no one under the age of 21 can be employed to work for a licensed distributor and in the warehouse. By law, we are prohibiting some people from seeking top-end job and career opportunities that exist in the marketplace today. If these artificial barriers were to be eliminated, it would not only provide for great opportunities for some deserving students, but also help some of our current business leaders to address severe worker shortages in critical areas of employment. It could be a win-win for both potential employees and employers.

- 3) It would help create career paths for the most deserving young people, who have non-traditional educational interests in such occupations as:
 - CDL Licensed Truck Drivers
 - Fork Lift Drivers and Warehouse Personnel
 - Sales Representatives and Merchandizers
 - Sign Designers and Crafters
 - Mechanics
 - IT Experts
 - Management Opportunities
- 4) Finally, it would allow MBEC to expand its' mission and assistance by truly providing "Education" to its' very name. Not only would the program be able to provide educational information to high school students on the dangers of under-age drinking, but it would provide "continuing education" opportunities after high school; into college or technical school; and provide a career path toward the future.