

**DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL**

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Follow us on Twitter @ https://twitter.com/ca_abcFollow ABC on Facebook @ <https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaABC>**PR 17- 14****March 13, 2017****447 Arrested in Statewide Underage Drinking Enforcement Operation***ABC and over 80 Local Law Enforcement Agencies Team Up to Increase Public Safety and Protect Youth*

(California) - Agents from the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) and Officers from approximately 80 local Police and Sheriff's Departments arrested or cited 447 individuals during a statewide underage drinking enforcement operation designed to create awareness to the problem of underage drinking and also protect California's youth while increasing public safety.

The goal of the operation was to raise awareness about the dangers of underage drinking and also make it clear to any adults that buy alcohol for minors that there are serious consequences. "Unfortunately over 4,000 young people die in alcohol-related tragedies every year in this country," said ABC Acting Director Ramona Prieto. "This collaborative effort among California peace officers creates awareness to underage drinking issues, increases public safety for communities and also boosts protections for California's young people."

The operation resulted in citations for 366 individuals who allegedly furnished alcoholic beverages to minors. 81 other individuals were either cited or taken into custody for various crimes such as drugs, public drunkenness, open containers, minor in possession of alcohol and there was even an arrest for armed robbery. The operation was an effort to build safer and stronger communities by holding individuals accountable for illegal activity that creates harm.

ABC agents and local law enforcement conducted a program called the "Decoy Shoulder Tap Operation". Under the program, a minor under the direct supervision of a peace officer will stand outside a liquor or convenience store and ask patrons to buy them alcohol. The minor indicates in some way he or she is underage and cannot purchase the alcohol. If the adults agree, and purchase alcohol for the minor, officers then arrest and cite them for furnishing alcohol to the minor. The penalty for furnishing alcohol to a minor is a minimum \$1000 fine and 24 hours of community service. The program is intended to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors. Many of today's local operations were funded by the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control through the Department's Grant Assistance Program (GAP) and some were funded by the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

ABC protects communities through excellence in education and by administering prevention and enforcement programs designed to increase compliance with California's alcoholic beverage laws.

ABC's mission is to provide the highest level of service and public safety through licensing, education and enforcement. To learn more about ABC programs that help protect communities, prevent alcohol-related harm and potentially save lives visit https://www.abc.ca.gov/programs/programs_PE.html. ABC is a Department of the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency.