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State Alcohol Regulation Focus on Day One of Center for Alcohol Policy Alcohol Law Symposium

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The [Sixth Annual Center for Alcohol Policy \(CAP\) Alcohol Law Symposium](#) began today at the Grand Hyatt Washington in Washington, D.C., with a welcome by CAP Advisory Council member and former Rhode Island Attorney General Patrick Lynch who noted that the symposium is a key opportunity for a diverse group of state alcohol regulators, public health advocates, members of the alcohol beverage industry and others interested in alcohol policy issues to come together to learn and share ideas. Lynch also introduced a [new video](#) which explains the origin of America's state-based regulatory system.

Nevada Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto delivered a keynote address on the role state attorneys general play in regulatory, law enforcement and public health functions. She discussed the state's history of alcohol regulation since its vote to ratify the 21st Amendment and emphasized her office's involvement in balancing support for local businesses that contribute to the economy while promoting alcohol's safe and responsible use and engaging in educational outreach.

A panel moderated by Ashley Trim of Pepperdine University's Davenport Institute addressed civic engagement and working with divergent views at the same policy table. Public health, alcohol regulatory and industry panelists addressed the question of who should make alcohol policy and how more stakeholders – such as religious groups, schools, health care professionals and law enforcement – can work together to achieve common public policy goals when alcohol policy decisions are considered.

Former National Transportation Safety Board Chair and CAP Advisory Council member Jim Hall introduced Barry Lynn, director of the Markets, Enterprise and Resiliency Initiative at the New America Foundation, by noting that regulation of the alcohol industry, like the airline industry, can benefit consumers and enhance public safety. Lynn spoke about America's increased globalization and the potential threat to American jobs by the continued monetization of basic Main Street businesses. He highlighted that the existence of an independent middle tier and state-based regulation in the U.S. alcohol industry is good for both the consumer but also the fabric of local communities.

CAP Advisory Council member and Cumberland School of Law professor Brannon Denning moderated a legal panel featuring Dan Schweitzer, Supreme Court counsel for the National Association of Attorneys General; Lisa Soronen, executive director of the State and Local Legal Center; and Edward Dawson, teaching fellow and assistant professor at Louisiana State University. The panelists updated attendees on states' rights cases currently before the Supreme Court and the potential impact for future alcohol cases involving issues of preemption, equal protection and the 21st Amendment.

Attendees also heard an update on the latest drunk driving issues from MADD Chief Government Affairs Officer J.T. Griffin and the Honorable James Dehn, Judge of District Court in Isanti County, Minnesota, who described innovative efforts to reduce drunk driving and build partnerships to engage entire communities in addressing the problem.

A tutorial on trade practices offered insights from federal alcohol regulator Robert Angelo, director of the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau Trade Investigations Unit, and state alcohol regulator Craig Miller, senior officer with the Arizona Department of Liquor Licenses and Control, on examples of possible violations of the tied house laws that prevent control of retailers and support access to market and consumer choice.

The final panel focused on the consequences of alcohol deregulation in the United Kingdom and lessons for the United States. Pam Erickson, president and CEO of Public Action Management PLC and former executive director of Oregon Liquor Control, contrasted the balanced approach of the U.S. regulatory system with the U.K., which deregulated alcohol over several decades so it is now sold almost anywhere 24 hours per day, is aggressively promoted and sold below-cost at supermarkets. As a result, she said, the U.K. is facing an alcohol epidemic characterized by increased rates of underage drinking and alcohol-related hospital admissions. Jim Cooper, board member of the Washington Association for Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention, outlined the negative impacts of recent deregulatory efforts in Washington state while Bill Kerr, senior scientist of the Alcohol Research Group, described research showing the public health problems that result from treating alcohol like a commodity and increasing its availability. Gabriel Romanus, former president/CEO of Swedish Alcohol Retailing Monopoly and former member of the Swedish Parliament, also offered an international example of alcohol regulations at work in Nordic countries that were challenged upon joining the European Union.

The Sixth Annual CAP Alcohol Law Symposium continues Friday, October 25 at The Grand Hyatt Washington in Washington, D.C. Additional details regarding the [symposium program](#) can be found at www.centerforalcoholpolicy.org.

For live updates from the event, follow [@AlcoholPolicy on Twitter](#) using the hashtag #CAPLaw.

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The [Center for Alcohol Policy](#) is a 501c(3) organization whose mission is to educate policy makers, regulators and the public about alcohol, its uniqueness and regulation. By conducting

sound and scientific-based research and implementing initiatives that will maintain the appropriate state-based regulation of alcohol, the Center promotes safe and responsible consumption, fights underage drinking and drunk driving and informs key entities about the effects of alcohol consumption. For more information, visit www.centerforalcoholpolicy.org or follow the Center on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/AlcoholPolicy](https://twitter.com/AlcoholPolicy).