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ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN URGES PABST TO REDUCE DANGEROUS ALCOHOLIC LEVEL IN NEW DRINK "BLAST"

Madigan Joins Group Urging Illinois Company to Address Alcohol Content of "Binge-in-a-Can" Product

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan sent a letter today to Pabst Brewing Company, based in Woodridge, Ill., urging the company to lessen the alcohol concentration in its new malt beverage marketed under the name Blast. Madigan is especially concerned over the product's potential danger to minors.

"Alcohol abuse among young people is a serious and alarming epidemic," Attorney General Madigan said. "A product like this only serves to glamorize alcohol abuse and promote binge drinking, threatening the safety of those consuming it."

The Attorneys General's letter, joined by 17 other state, city and territory officials, details concerns over Blast, which amounts to a "binge-in-a-can." The 12-percent alcohol concentration of Blast means a single 23.5 ounce container is equivalent to drinking an entire six-pack of typical American beer. Madigan said the promotion and marketing of Blast appeals to minors, with its brightly colored cans and fruit flavors and a marketing campaign featuring hip-hop artist Snoop Dogg.

The group issued their demand as part of their ongoing effort as members of the National Association of Attorneys General Youth Access to Alcohol Committee that aims to reduce youth access to alcohol and spread awareness of the dangers of underage drinking. Joining Attorney General Madigan in sending the letter to Pabst were her counterparts in Arizona, California, Connecticut, Guam, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah and Washington, and the San Francisco city attorney.

The Attorney General's action today is the latest step in her ongoing effort to protect young people from harmful products. In 2008, Madigan and the attorneys general of 12 other states and the San Francisco city attorney initiated investigations of the two leading manufacturers of alcoholic energy drinks at that time, MillerCoors Brewing and Anheuser-Busch Inc, which resulted in a halting the beverages' production.

In 2007, Madigan urged the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau to increase its efforts to prevent misleading claims by alcoholic energy drink manufacturers. Similarly, Madigan joined other attorneys general that same year urging Anheuser-Busch to change its advertising of another alcoholic energy drink, Spykes, and the company pulled the drink from store shelves.

Attorney General Madigan has also taken action to stop companies from using illicit drug culture themes to market non-alcoholic energy drinks to young people. In 2008, Madigan demanded that Las Vegas Kingpin Concepts Inc. discontinue its cocaine-themed energy drink named "Blow," a drink mix that glorified drug culture and raised serious health concerns due to its high caffeine content. Kingpin agreed to cease sales of the product in Illinois. Madigan reached a similar agreement in 2007 with the California-based Redux Beverages LLC, for its distribution of an energy drink named "Cocaine."

Additionally, in 2006, Madigan and 38 other attorneys general entered a settlement with R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company to end its sale of candy-, fruit- and alcohol-flavored cigarettes that the group allegedly targeted mainly to youth.

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