

Society of Beer Advocates (SOBA) Inc.  
Friday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

11 Malda Grove  
Khandallah  
Wellington  
<http://www.soba.org.nz>

## **SOBA DISAPPOINTED AT BYLAW OVERREACTION**

### *Beer lovers tired of knee-jerk bans*

SOBA, New Zealand's consumer beer advocacy and promotion society, is very disappointed at what it perceives to be a knee-jerk reaction to the supposed problem of public drunkenness. The Wellington City Council yesterday voted overwhelmingly in favour of a city-wide ban on public consumption of alcohol, with a final vote due for late June after public consultation had taken place.

"The ban is a ridiculous catch-all", said a spokesman for SOBA. "It is a poorly thought out and draconian measure, which punishes the masses in order to prevent the sins of a relatively small number of troublemakers". SOBA considers the proposed ban to be yet another step in the wrong direction on the road of changing the drinking culture of New Zealand. SOBA firmly believes the way to improve the occasionally excessive drinking culture of New Zealand is not with the big stick of liquor bans, but with the carrot of better quality drinking in more sociable quantities.

New Zealand is still a young culture, analogous to a teenager in the ancient world history of drinking. "You don't simply ban a teenager from doing something because their immediate reaction is to rebel", says SOBA. "Instead, you make every effort to educate the teenager, while holding them fully accountable for their actions". SOBA believes that it is the individuals causing trouble who should be held fully accountable for their actions via better policing. "There are already laws in place designed to prevent drunk and disorderly behaviour. Enforce them!" was the recommendation from SOBA.

SOBA was formed in 2006 in order to increase awareness of and appreciation for flavourful crafted beers. It promotes a "less is more" approach to drinking, and is in favour of reducing alcohol related crime by increasing appreciation for beer as a flavourful beverage, like wine, and not as a simple vector for alcohol ingestion.

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To discuss this issue further, or to schedule an interview, please contact the press officer for SOBA, Greig McGill on (021) 753 026, or via email at [press@soba.org.nz](mailto:press@soba.org.nz).