



State Liquor Authority

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JOINT UNDERAGE DRINKING INVESTIGATION UNCOVERS FLAGRANT VIOLATIONS OF NEW YORK STATE LAWS AT ALBANY BAR

71 Arrested as State Liquor Authority Begins Proceedings to Suspend the Establishment's Liquor License

New York State Liquor Authority (SLA) Chairman Vincent A. Bradley and Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Executive Deputy Commissioner Terri Egan today announced the results of a joint enforcement action at The Smokin' Bull, located at 53 N. Lake Avenue in Albany.

On the night of Thursday, November 12, SLA and DMV investigators, in cooperation with the Albany Police Department, conducted a compliance inspection at the premises. Out of approximately 125 patrons at the establishment, 115 were found to be under the age of 21. DMV investigators confiscated 75 counterfeit licenses and arrested 71 individuals for allegedly possessing fraudulent identification documents or presenting another person's driver license. SLA investigators documented 32 sales to minors, including 16 direct sales observed by SLA investigators and 16 sworn statements from minors. In addition, two bartenders were arrested for unlawful dealing with a minor by the Albany Police Department. As a result of these findings, SLA has begun proceedings to suspend the establishment's liquor license.

"Preventing the sale of alcohol to minors is a priority for the State Liquor Authority," Chairman Bradley said. "These details will continue, and licensees must understand when they sell to minors, they are putting their license and livelihood in jeopardy."

"Working with our state and local partners, DMV investigators work to deter underage drinking and possession of fake IDs while keeping our roads safe throughout the year," said DMV Executive Deputy Commissioner Terri Egan. "The violations our investigators found at The Smokin' Bull were some of the worst we have seen in some time. I thank our partners at the State Liquor Authority for taking immediate action to address this matter and look forward to continuing these efforts to prevent underage drinking across New York State in the future."

During this enforcement action, DMV's Division of Field Investigation (DFI) recovered 75 counterfeit documents, including 31 allegedly issued from Connecticut, 14 from Pennsylvania, nine from New York, seven from New Jersey, six from Rhode Island, three from Maryland, two from Florida, and one each from Ohio, Illinois and Arizona. In addition, six individuals were arrested for possession of someone else's New York State License. During such sweeps, DFI examines the identity documents of people seeking to purchase alcohol or enter bars. Possession of a fake ID will typically result in an arrest and the seizure of the fake identity document. Individuals who are arrested face administrative action that normally results in a suspension of their license for a minimum of 90 days.

This past summer, DMV announced several underage-drinking-related measures, including

[raising awareness](#) about the perils of purchasing fake IDs over the internet, which increases the chance of buyers becoming victims of identity fraud and theft. DMV also [teamed up with the State Liquor Authority](#) to educate bar owners, security personnel, and service staff of licensed establishments about the security features included within DMV's new driver licenses, permits, and ID cards issued by the state.

In 2014, the State Liquor Authority successfully prosecuted 2,039 sales to minor violations, a 19 percent increase from 2013 and a 97 percent increase from 1,036 prosecutions in 2010. In addition to increased enforcement, the State Liquor Authority works closely with the licensed community to increase compliance, including certifying and promoting Alcohol Training Awareness Program to educate licensees and servers on preventing sales to minors and intoxicated patrons. The number of completed Alcohol Training Awareness Program trainings has more than doubled from 5,407 individuals trained in 2010, to 11,499 in 2014.

For more information on SLA, please visit: sla.ny.gov. For more information on DMV, please visit: dmv.ny.gov.

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