



Empowering Municipalities to Ban the Sale of Nips

Tom Metzner, CT Towns Nixing the Nips



The Problem with Nips

- Easy to Conceal
- Cheaper than larger bottles in some cases
- Facilitates Drinking and Driving
 - Easy to mix with juice or soda and throw out the window
 - Easy to quickly consume to hide drinking from, boss, family, others




How it started

- Observed Nips while walking near my house
- Went back and picked them up and counted them
- 65 in 15 minutes in a small stretch close to a package store and the high school
- We should ban these like plastic bags
- Started with a call to a reporter at the Hartford Courant which led to a story
 - Found out that Connecticut Towns can't ban the sale of nips!
 - Heard from others that had also collected nips and were frustrated



The Liquor Control Act

- Chapter 545 of the Connecticut General Statutes
 - Dates Back to 1932 – regulates the sale of alcohol in Connecticut coming out of Prohibition
 - Allows towns to decide to be “dry” or “wet” but not regulate categories of liquor
 - Massachusetts towns have the authority to ban nips – regulations were written or interpreted differently than Connecticut
 - This law did not foresee nip litter
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CT Towns Nixing the Nips

- Currently at 93 members
- Concerned Connecticut residents that would like to see nips banned or at least give municipalities the right to ban them
- Formed in 2023
- Facebook Group
- We share information on nips and strategize on how to get municipal ban authority
- Monthly Zoom calls and leadership meetings

House Bill 5215

- Copy of the Bill
- Would have given towns the authority to ban nips
- Public Hearing February 28
- Did not get a vote in the Environment Committee
- Opposition
 - Wine and Spirits Wholesalers
 - Package Stores
 - Other members of Alcohol related industries
- Support
 - Conservation groups
 - Conn River Conservancy
 - Mystic Aquarium
 - Concerned citizens



Results of Municipal Bans in Massachusetts

- Chelsea - the number of alcohol related emergency call dropped from 720 in 2015, the year before the ban went into effect, to 400 calls in 2018 and 216 in 2020
- Falmouth - nips constituted 32% of litter but only 7% after the sales ban
- Nip bans drastically reduce litter and drinking and driving



What about the Deposit System?

- That was discussed and rejected when bottle bill was updated
- We can have a bottle bill including nips and municipal bans - not exclusive
- Package store owners will oppose
- Does not impact drinking and driving



5 cent tax

- Towns receive 5 cents per nip sold in their town
- \$2.3 million in last reported six month period
- New Haven received \$104,000
- This money is having the effect of lessening town support for ban authority



Next Steps

- Get another bill introduced in 2025
- Build our coalition
- Get legislative support
- Bring this issue to candidate forums
- Join us!