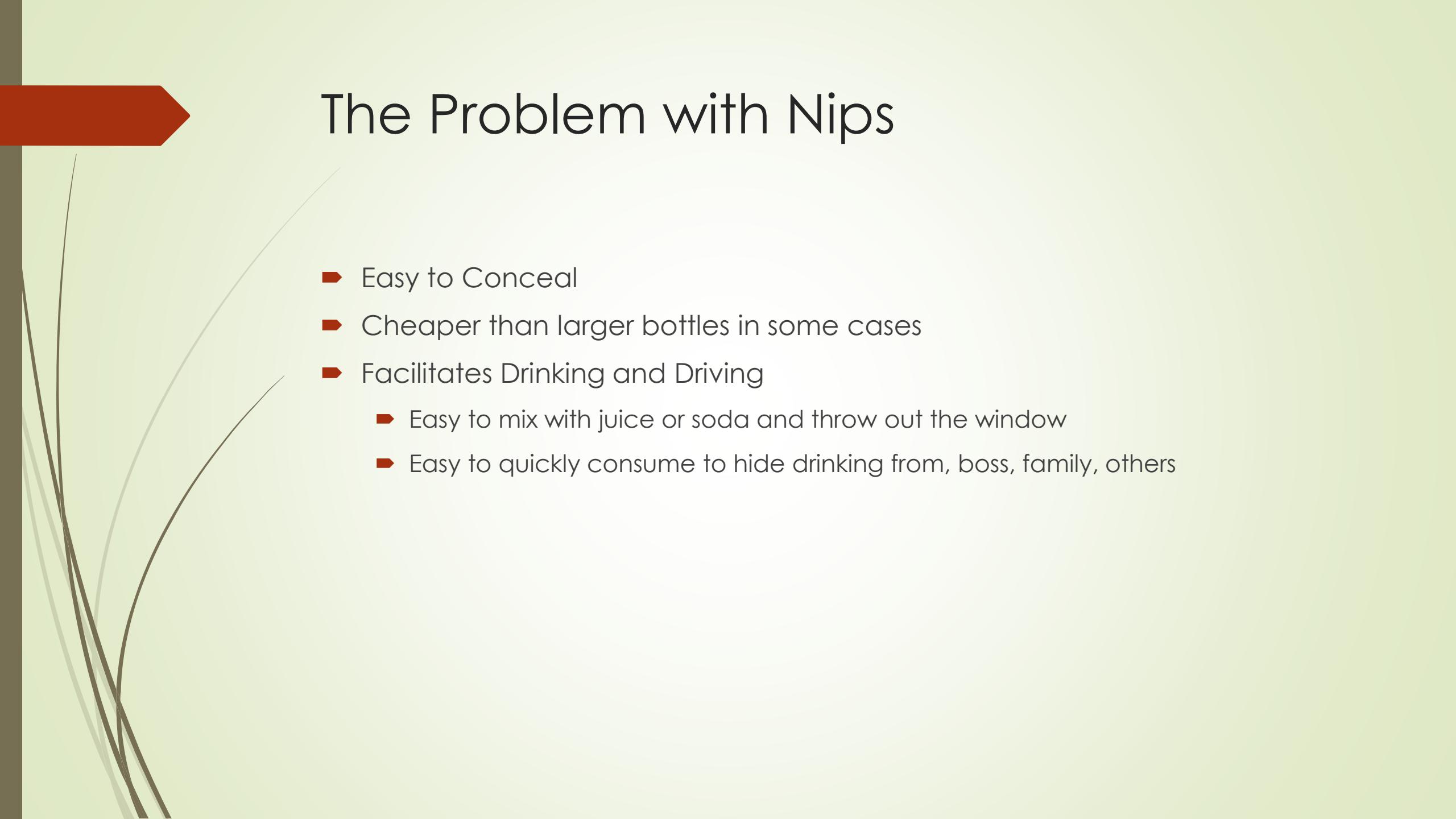




# Empowering Municipalities to Ban the Sale of Nips

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



# 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!