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Portland, ME—For background information on stories related to the recent deaths of two underage drinkers, 21 Reasons would like to provide the following research and statistical information:

- Alcohol kills 6.5 times more youth in this country than all other illegal drugs combined. ^{i ii}
- College students are binge drinking, drinking heavily, and driving drunk at significantly higher rates than non-students. ⁱⁱⁱ
 - It is estimated that 1,400 college students die each year from alcohol-related injuries. ^{iv}
 - The NIAAA 2002 report on college drinking estimated that more than 70,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 experience alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape each year in the United States. ^v
 - Alcohol-involved sexual assaults more often occur among college students who know each other only casually and who spend time together at a party or bar. ^{vi}
- Early binge drinking has been linked to health problems later in life, such as heart disease, stroke, and type II diabetes. ^{vii}
- The majority of alcohol-related deaths, disability and damage is attributable to moderate drinkers who engage in occasional risky drinking, not those who are dependent on alcohol. ^{viii}
- Having designated drivers or taking away the car keys doesn't make underage drinking safe: Only one-third of underage drinking deaths involve auto crashes. The remaining two-thirds involve alcohol poisoning, homicides, suicides, and unintentional injuries such as burns, drowning, and falls. ^{ix}

What to do:

- We need to speak loudly if we want our voices heard. The alcohol industry spends more than \$5 billion in advertising each year, including ads and product placement in television, movies, magazines, radio, internet, sporting events and team sponsorships, and points-of-purchase. ^x
- Be an activist. Let decision-makers know how you feel! Check out the latest research-based policy recommendations at alcoholpolicysolutions.net, beawarenow.org, cspinet.org/booze, and jointogether.org.
 - *State:* Contact your representative to the [Maine legislature](#)
 - *Federal:* To contact your representatives in the U.S. Congress, visit Senators [Olympia Snowe](#) and [Susan Collins](#); and Congressmen [Tom Allen](#) and [Mike Michaud](#).
 - *Local:* Join a coalition. See 21reasons.org for Portland and Casco Bay area coalition information where you can change community norms, reduce youth access to alcohol and strengthen enforcement of underage drinking, furnishing, and hosting laws.

ⁱ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Public Health Service. National Institutes of Health. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Ninth Special Report to the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health, NIH Publication No. 97-4017, 1997.

ⁱⁱ MMWR, June 28, 2002 / 51(SS04);1-64: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5104a1.htm>

ⁱⁱⁱ 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: National Findings, SAMSHA Office of Applied Studies, <http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/nsduh/2k6nsduh/2k6results.pdf>

^{iv} Hingson, R.W. et al. (2002). Magnitude of alcohol-related mortality and morbidity among U.S. college students ages 18-24. *J. Stud. Alcohol* 63: 136-144.

^v Task Force of the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. (2002). *A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges*. Washington, DC: National Institutes of Health.

^{vi} Abbey, A. (2002). Alcohol-related sexual assault: A common problem among college students. *J. Stud. Alcohol*. Supplement No. 14: 118-128.

^{vii} <http://www.jointogether.org/news/research/summaries/2007/early-binge-drinking-linked.html?log-event=sp2f-view-item&nid=34813048>

^{viii} Toomey, T.L. & Wagenaar, A.C. (2002). Environmental policies to reduce college drinking: options and research findings. *J. Stud. Alcohol*, Supplement No. 14: 193-205.

^{ix} Hingson & Kenkel, 2004. Social, health, and economic consequences of underage drinking. In *Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility*, Background Papers

^x Federal Trade Commission, *Self-Regulation in the Alcohol Industry*, Appendix B: Alcohol Advertising Expenditures, iii

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