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21 Reasons Pledges Support of U.S. Surgeon General's Call to Action on Underage Drinking

PORTLAND, ME: Local group 21 Reasons today pledged their support of acting U.S. Surgeon General Kenneth Moritsugu's "Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking." This local support adds steam to the state's strong response to the Surgeon General's Call to Action, announced at a press conference on March 6th. In Portland, 21 Reasons is working to prevent underage drinking with a multi-pronged approach:

Empowering parents: The 21 Reasons Parent Media Campaign, including television ads, print materials and radio spots, will launch in April to support parents of teenagers with the latest tips and information about preventing underage drinking. This year's campaign title is "Now We Know." 21 Reasons is also planning a parent forum in April focusing on the latest brain research and health information about alcohol and teens.

Reducing youth access to alcohol: 21 Reasons is working on reducing alcohol availability to youth from both retail and social sources through a combination of policy change, enforcement, training, and public awareness.

Increasing enforcement of existing underage drinking laws--particularly those around furnishing alcohol to minors. 21 Reasons partner agencies include the Portland Police Department, County Sheriff's Office, District Attorney's Office, and the Department of Corrections.

21 Reasons projects are led by volunteers representing all sectors of the community. Short-term and long-term volunteer opportunities are available, and all concerned individuals and organizations are invited to participate.

Erica Schmitz, Coordinator of 21 Reasons, said, "The Surgeon General's report clearly states that we all have a role and a responsibility to reduce underage drinking--whether we are parents, youth, teachers, law enforcement officers, business owners, or simply concerned citizens. The report emphasizes the importance of exactly the kind of work that we're doing at the local level. We hope that as a result, more adults and youth will join our efforts."

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