

YAKIMA, WA — Attorney General Rob McKenna; Roger Hoen, Washington Liquor Control Board; Assistant Chief Brian Ursino, Washington State Patrol; and Lowell Porter, Director, Traffic Safety Commission; joined Erik Strickland of The Century Council today to launch a public awareness campaign to prevent underage drinking. “We Don’t Serve Teens,” developed by The Federal Trade Commission and The Century Council, a national not-for-profit organization funded by the nation’s leading distillers, is a new initiative designed to inform adults in English and Spanish that providing underage youth with alcohol is unsafe, illegal, and irresponsible. The launch took place at State Liquor Store #165 on West Nob Hill Boulevard.

**“Study after study shows that youth are obtaining the alcohol they drink from people they know,” said Attorney General McKenna. “You may find it surprising that data shows that kids cite their parents as the leading influence over their decision to drink - or not to drink - alcohol.** When you talk, they really do listen. It is our hope this campaign will encourage parents to start and continue a dialogue with their teen about the dangers of underage drinking.” “We are unveiling our ‘We Don’t Serve Teens’ campaign today to help prevent underage purchases and consumption of alcohol throughout the year. The Century Council has found that nearly one in five (17%) adults believe it is acceptable for parents to provide alcohol to their teenagers in their own home. Turning a blind eye is as irresponsible as putting a drink in their hands,” said Erik Strickland of The Century Council. To determine parents’ perspective on the issue of adults providing alcohol to underage youth, The Century Council commissioned a survey of 1,000 adults. The results show that overwhelmingly, parents do not believe it is acceptable for other adults to provide beverage alcohol to underage youth. Ninety-six percent of adults said it is unacceptable for another parent or other adult to provide alcohol to their teenager without their permission. Further, all survey respondents said if they learned another parent or adult provided alcohol to their teenager without their permission, they would consider taking recourse against the other parent, or their child.

The top actions adults would take include: • speaking with my child about the dangers and consequences of underage drinking (93%), • call

that adult and express my objections/feelings/opinions (86%), • restrict my child's time at that family's house (80%), • limit my child's relationship with that family (76%), • notify other parents (74%), and • punish my own child (69%). Other actions adults report they would take if such an incident occurred include calling the police (44%), reporting the incident to the school (40%), and taking legal action, such as file charges, sue them, etc. (34%). “Among 12-20 year olds, more than 28 percent reported past month alcohol consumption in Washington (SAMHSA),” said Hoen.

“Protecting the safety, particularly the safety of our state’s most precious resource – our young people – is a top priority for the Washington Liquor Control Board. Restaurants, wholesalers, retailers – all of us – need to play a role in the fight against underage drinking, to lower, and hopefully eliminate, underage drinking in Washington.” “While it is certainly important to discourage underage sales, kids get alcohol from other sources, and kids can be very creative about obtaining alcohol,” said Asst. Chief Ursino. “Last year in Washington, 519 youths under the age of 18 were arrested for driving under the influence, and 3,508 youths were arrested for liquor law violations. (UCR 2005). Parents, retail establishments, community groups – we all have a role to play in the fight against underage drinking. The State Patrol will be working aggressively with our partners to detect and arrest those who fail to heed our warning. Please help us to keep alcohol out of our teens’ hands.” Director Lowell Porter added, “Underage drinking is illegal in the state of Washington and we are working hard to ensure that teens do not have access to alcohol. But we can’t do it alone. We encourage parents to be good role models, let your teen know you disapprove of underage drinking, and supervise their activities.” The Washington Liquor Control Board will distribute point of purchase materials in English and Spanish to 360 Washington Liquor Control Board stores in Yakima as a reminder to parents and other adults that providing alcohol to teens can mean serious consequences and to encourage them to speak up about underage drinking. Elements of the campaign include television and radio public service announcement, print ad, lapel pins, register signs, and posters. The Century Council will distribute the public service announcement to television stations that serve Yakima and has launched the campaign in 25 other markets nationwide so far. The campaign will continue

to be rolled out in cities across the country through 2007. For more information on the campaign or to order materials visit [www.dontserveteens.gov](http://www.dontserveteens.gov) or [www.centurycouncil.org](http://www.centurycouncil.org).

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