

# Roosevelt's stance on alcohol prohibition

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In 1919, the 18th amendment was established and prohibited the making, transporting, and selling of alcoholic beverages. 12 years later, Democratic presidential candidate Franklin Delano Roosevelt won the 1932 election and ended prohibition with the 21st amendment. This 12-inch-tall, 8-inch-wide rectangular poster depicted Roosevelt's stance on Prohibition. The repeal poster was created to show Roosevelt's support to repeal Prohibition during his 1932 presidential campaign. This poster originated from the presidential campaign in 1932 as Roosevelt hoped to gain support and become president. The goal of the creator of the poster was to appeal to American voters as many people hoped to end Prohibition as well. These posters were passed out to Roosevelt's supporters in hopes of winning the election against President Herbert Hoover. The artifact conveyed Roosevelt's message to the American people and his hopes to end the disastrous effects of Prohibition. Prohibition cost the federal government a total of \$11 billion in lost tax revenue, while costing over \$300 million to enforce. This poster not only displayed the popular view against prohibition, but also the role of the government to repeal unmanageable laws on the American people. The red, white and blue composition of the poster represented the colors of America and the sense of national pride that Roosevelt hoped to convey during his presidential campaign. Through this poster, Roosevelt's campaign hoped to appeal to American voters and gain their vote in the 1932 election. The creator of this poster supported Roosevelt and hoped to get him elected into office. While the poster reflected later views on Prohibition, its main purpose was to win votes for Roosevelt during his election. More importantly, the support for Roosevelt demonstrated the public response to the unintended

consequences of Prohibition. During the first years of Prohibition the number of crimes committed in 30 major cities in the U. S. increased 24% and the Prohibition Bureau intentionally poisoned stolen industrial alcohol, killing at least 10, 000 by 1933. This increase rate of crime and catastrophic government policy only boosted Roosevelt's approval during his presidential election. With overwhelming support, Franklin Roosevelt won 472 electoral votes to President Herbert Hoover's 59 electoral votes. This staggering amount of support in favor of Roosevelt demonstrated the immense public outcry against the decade of prohibition and all its unintended consequences.

While the majority of Americans supported repealing Prohibition, this artifact did not reflect the view of pro-Prohibitionists like Herbert Hoover. Hoover described Prohibition as " a great social and economic experiment, noble in motive and far-reaching in purpose." On the other hand, Roosevelt strongly opposed Prohibition throughout his campaign. In a campaign address in Sea Girt New Jersey, he stated, "...a great temperance by the forcing of Prohibition have been accompanied in most parts of the country by complete and tragic failure. I need not point out to you that general encouragement of lawlessness has resulted." Roosevelt resented Prohibition because of its failures to produce the results that it hoped to achieve. Finally, on December 5, 1933, the 21st amendment repealed the 18th amendment with the full support of President Franklin Roosevelt. The repeal of the 18th amendment resulted in a change of social stigma regarding alcohol that Roosevelt had hoped with his " Roosevelt Pledges Repeal" Poster during his 1932 presidential campaign.