

# Lowering the legal age of drinking



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

## Lowering the Legal Age of Drinking

Despite the strong dissent from the part of federal safety officials, the minimum legal drinking age (MLDA) is likely to be brought down to 18 as some advocates forcefully argue that teenagers who are permitted to vote and bleed for their country must also be allowed to enjoy one or two beers. At the same time, opponents point to a reported increase in binge drinking among adolescents as an obvious cause for not reducing the MLDA.

Evidently, reducing MLDA will raise serious socio-economic and cultural issues including a considerable increase in crime rates and accident rates. The considerable level of fatal road accident mitigation is one of the potential advantages of the higher drinking age. A study by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shows that higher drinking ages could save approximately 22, 798 lives on American roadways from 1975 to 2003 (msn). Concerned officials say that teens are more unlikely to use seatbelts or helmets when they drink. Likewise, there is a close relationship between teenage drinking and gun/gang crimes. Hence, the lowering of MLDA may adversely affect the country.

The MLDA lowering supporters commonly say, “ If you are old enough to go to war, you should be old enough to drink” or “ the drinking –age law just increases the desire for the forbidden fruit”. The military largely recruits youngsters mainly because they can be easily molded t into efficient soldiers. However, the act of recruiting youngsters for the military does not mean that they have grown enough to drink. Scientific studies clearly state that drinking is dangerous to teenagers as they are still in the stages of physical and mental development (Mulligan, 25-26). The drunken teenagers are more likely to take risks and that would lead them to dangers.

Researches show that when some states had fixed the MLDA as 18, teenagers in those states in between 18 and 21 drank more and liked to drink more as adults. In contrast, youngsters drank less in their early 20s when the states in which they involved had 21 as their MLDA. In the opinion of Gaither (2008), the frustrating impacts of underage drinking range from academic failure to robbery. A person under 21 may not have completed his academic studies. Psychological studies warn that drinking habit would distract the teenagers' interest from academic studies. In addition, alcohol substances are capable of stimulating risky sexual behaviors, especially of teens. Hence, the lowering of MLDA from 21 also seems to be an issue of public safety and national interests.

In contrast, when the youngsters under 21 are prohibited to drink, it seems to be a matter of basic right violation since the Federal law has set 18 as maturity age. It is argued that the 21 MLDA also cannot prevent college drinking or other secret drinking. For instance, a number of illegal youth drinkers are arrested everyday in US.

However, despite the few challenges, the lowering of MLDA appears to be a potential threat to youngsters' future as well as to the public safety.

Therefore any step toward lowering MLDA would be fallacy.

#### Works Cited

Johnson, Alex. " Debate on Lower Drinking Age". Msnbc. com, Aug 14, 2007. Web 24 June 2011  
Mulligan, Pat. The Life and Times of Hollywood Bad Boy. authorHouse, 2006. Print.