



**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
January 29, 2020**

**Senate Bill 209  
Criminal Law - Unruly Social Gatherings - Civil Penalties**

**Support**

NCADD-Maryland supports Senate Bill 209. A civil social host law allows law enforcement to write a civil citation to, instead of arresting, the host of a loud unruly party. This approach to addressing these disrupting and potentially dangerous situations has proven to be an effective deterrent as it is a less cumbersome approach for law enforcement and does not lead to the collateral consequences of criminal records.

A citation can be issued for a number of activities, including underage drinking or public drunkenness. In effect in five local jurisdictions already in Maryland, the results have included reductions in excessive drinking at house parties among college students. This is important as approximately one in five Maryland college students meet the criteria for alcohol dependence or abuse, and nearly one in ten have suffered assaults or property damage due to someone else's drinking.

Maryland college students who drink at off-campus house parties are three times more likely to injure someone, damage property, perform poorly on a test or project, or get in trouble with campus police, compared to those who do not. They are also twice as likely to miss class and get in trouble with off-campus police, and more than 1.5 times as likely to ride with a drinking driver, experience sexual misconduct, or have unprotected sex.

As college campuses look for effective ways to reduce dangerous alcohol consumptions, and as neighborhoods look for effective ways to reduce neighborhood nuisances, Senate Bill 209 is a win-win. We urge a favorable report.

*The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.*