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BE SMART BE SAFE

April 10, 2017

Greetings:

It is that time of year when students in our county will be taking part in proms and graduations. Although it is justifiably a time of joy and celebration, it is equally one for caution and restraint. I am writing to enlist your assistance in helping to prevent the potentially tragic consequences of drinking and driving.

Alcohol is by far the most widely used drug among our youth and is directly associated with risk-taking behavior and other disinhibiting effects that increase the chance of unsafe conduct on their part. Unfortunately, in recent years, our county has experienced its tragic results.

On February 19, 2008, in an effort to combat drunk driving Ulster County passed "Local Law Number 2 of 2008," * which, in pertinent part, provides that "no person having control of any premises shall allow an open house party to take place at said residence if such person knows or has reason to know that any alcoholic beverage or drug is being unlawfully possessed, served to or consumed by a minor (under 21) at said residence." It defines "open house party" as "a social gathering at a residence or other private property with minors present."

In addition, the Social Host Liability Act of the State of New York imposes civil liability upon any individual who knowingly serves or permits alcohol to be served to a minor if that minor causes injury to another as a result of his or her intoxication.

Furthermore, Section 260.20 of the Penal Law of the State of New York authorizes the prosecution of any individual who gives or sells or causes to be given or sold any alcoholic beverage to a person less than 21 years old.

I ask that if you permit the use of your home for a prom or graduation event, you monitor the situation carefully to insure that minors in attendance do not imbibe alcoholic beverages.

Please help to make this graduation season a time of celebration. Help keep our children, our loved ones, and our county safe.

Sincerely,



D. Holley Carnright
District Attorney

*To view the entire Social Host Law go to the Ulster County District Attorney Website by clicking on co.ulster.ny.us and go to department/agencies/district attorney.