



COALITION
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MICHIGAN

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Wine Shipments to Minors Prove ID Check System Unreliable

Age verification databases no match for computer savvy teens

LANSING, Mich. — A recent demonstration proves that the current age verification system that many states and wineries are counting on to prevent sales to minors does not work with sufficient reliability. That is a risk that the Coalition for a Safe and Responsible Michigan is not willing to accept when it comes to protecting our youth in Michigan.

CSRM announced yesterday that a 20 year-old college student was allowed to purchase alcohol online and have boxes of beer, wine and liquor delivered to her doorstep without presenting proof of identification — in some instances boxes were left on her porch unattended or signed for by her 18 year-old sister. Some wine producers have claimed that database technology and delivery driver enforcement would be sufficient safeguards. One of the Michigan wine producers who did sell to the minor claimed in media reports that they use a national database system to check for age.

“This goes to show that when it comes to Internet alcohol sales and direct shipment, national databases and delivery drivers are unreliable,” said Betty Mercer, director of the Coalition for a Safe and Responsible Michigan. “With yesterday’s Pew report showing 9 out of 10 teens are using the Internet, this is a problem that is sure to grow if left unchecked.”

The Pew Internet & American Life Project announced a survey yesterday that revealed that nearly nine of 10 young people ages 12 through 17 have online access -- up from about three-quarters of young people in 2000.

CSRM is a grassroots organization of safety conscious groups, industry organizations and concerned citizens — including the Michigan Sheriffs’ Association, the Deputy Sheriff’s Association of Michigan, the Michigan Secondary School Principals Association, the Associated Food Dealers of Michigan, and the Michigan Beer & Wine Wholesalers Association — that promotes safe and responsible alcohol sales in Michigan. For more information, please visit www.safeandresponsible.org.

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The Pew report on teen Internet use can be found at www.pewinternet.org.