



El Dorado County Office of Education

Date: January 27, 2009
To: Board of Supervisors
From: Vicki L. Barber, Ed.D.
Subject: Wine Ordinance

Vicki L. Barber, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Cathy Bean
Deputy Superintendent

Terena Mendonca
Associate Superintendent

County Board of Education
Dolores Garcia
John Lane
Matt Boyer
Gene Rasmussen
Heidi Weiland

I apologize for not being at your meeting to be able to offer my comments in person. However, I serve on a statewide Commission for Charter Schools and the meeting for that group is on the same day as your meeting. So I have requested Laurel Brent-Bumb to present my comments regarding the Wine Ordinance before you.

I appreciate all the work that the Planning Commission, wine industry representatives, staff and others have devoted to working through the issues involved in drafting the Wine Ordinance. I also want to acknowledge the efforts of all involved to work in a cooperative manner to try and develop an Ordinance that responds to the various interests of all the stakeholders in this process. We certainly recognize that this is not an easy process.

I would like to ask that the Board consider one small clarification to the proposed Wine Ordinance and that would be to add the following language – “charitable or government entity sponsored events or activities shall not be considered as events or activities within the meaning of this Ordinance.” Additional clarification language could also be included, such as: “For purposes of the Ordinance a chartable entity is defined as a non-profit public benefit 501 (c) (3) corporation or an agricultural mutual benefit corporation 501 (c) (5), or a business league 501 (c) (6). “Sponsorship” means attestation in writing by a defined charitable or governmental entity that it is in fact an event or activity sponsor.”

I believe that this language is in the best interests of our community at large by allowing the wineries in our area to continue to support recognized community based organizations, as well as government agencies. In the past, many wineries have allowed their facilities to be used at no cost for retirement functions, recognition events for community leaders, art auctions, and other fund raisers that have benefitted the non-profit organization. If under the proposed ordinance, these type of events would count against the winery in reaching the capped amount of events, I fear that many of the wineries will be hesitant to continue this philanthropic practice. The result would be that non-profit organizations, as well as government entities, may be forced to pay for facilities and will in fact realize less resources for the critical work they provide in our communities.

As you consider the Wine Ordinance before you, I am hopeful that you can include this clarification in the language. I believe that such a clarification would avoid the unintended consequences of reducing support for our community based organizations. Thank you for all of your support and efforts on behalf of our communities throughout El Dorado County.

530-622-7130
FAX 530-621-2543

e-mail: info@edcoe.k12.ca.us

6767 Green Valley Road
Placerville, CA 95667-8984

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