

July 9, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H.R. 8471 - Use of alcoholic beverages in the Panama Canal Zone. This bill authorizes regulation of the use of alcoholic beverages by persons under the age of 18 in the Panama Canal Zone and to prescribe penalties for the violation of those regulations.

Current law authorizes the President to regulate only the manufacture, sale, importation, or exportation of alcohol in the Canal Zone.

H.R. 8471 will also establish a fine of not more than \$100 or imprisonment of not more than 30 days in jail, or both, for violation of these regulations. The level of these penalties would allow the offenses of minors to be heard in the Canal Zone Magistrate's Court.

Finally, the bill will amend the current law by authorizing the President to issue regulations on the distribution of alcohol, so as to prohibit an adult from purchasing alcohol for a minor. Violations of the regulations on distribution of alcohol would be punishable by fines up to \$500 and imprisonment up to 6 months, or both, and would be heard in the U.S. District Court.

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