AMERICAN FAMILY ASSOCIATION

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TO: Members of Gideon's Brigade
FROM: Don Wildmon
PROJECT: Banning alcoholic advertising from broadcasting

Dear Friend and Supporter:

Great news! Because of your letters and phone calls, Toyota has announced that they will no longer advertise in Playboy magazine. That means hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in advertising loss for Playboy. It also means that no automobile maker now advertises in the porn publication!

More great news! Andrew Gatto, President of Matchbox Toys, told me that his company has discontinued plans to produce and market a doll based on the character Freddy Krueger. Krueger goes around killing people in the TV shows "Freddy's Nightmares" and in the "Nightmare on Elm Street" series of horror films.

Gatto told me that 40,000 of the dolls have already been shipped, but that another 160,000 parts had not been assembled. He said that Matchbox, at great financial loss, would not assemble the remaining dolls and would drop the line.

Gatto's action came after I supplied him with material concerning the Freddy character. After studying the material, Gatto told me that Matchbox had decided that the company did not wish to be identified with the doll.

You are making a difference! Now for our next project.

We have a major drug problem in this country. Unfortunately, the media and government officials have nearly totally ignored this drug problem. The drug of which I speak is alcohol. It is the most abused drug in our society and does more damage than all other drugs.

In order to help begin to solve this problem, one of the best things we can do is to ban alcohol ads from broadcasting. It is time we stopped letting the alcohol industry lead our youth into believing that if you drink a certain kind of beer, you can be sexy, successful, powerful and happy.

According to the Campaign Against Drunk Driving, *25,000 Americans were killed in 1988 in auto accidents involving alcohol.* In addition, over half a million more were injured from alcohol-related auto accidents.

According to proceedings from the Surgeon General's December 1988 Workshop on Drunk Driving, just over two Americans are killed every hour on our streets in alcohol-related auto accidents. And 40% of all teenage deaths result from auto crashes, of which half are alcohol-related.

A 1987 Gallup Poll reported alcohol abuse accounts for more family problems (such as child and spouse abuse) than any other single factor. Former Secretary of Health and Human Services Otis Bowen stated that alcohol is involved in one out of every three cases of child molestation, and between 25% and 50% of all cases of domestic violence.

A *Time* magazine feature (10/30/87) on alcohol reported nearly half of the nation's homeless are alcoholics.

In dollars and cents, the cost of alcohol abuse is massive. *The social cost of alcohol abuse was estimated at $89.5 billion back in 1980. By 1987, that cost skyrocketed to $117 billion (Time,* 10/30/87). For each ounce of alcohol sold, Americans pay 48¢ in social costs. (1989 Rand Corporation Study). We are subsidizing the **consequences** of the alcohol industry with tax dollars while the alcohol industry keeps their profit.

However, looking at today's TV commercials, we do not see or hear about these facts and costs. Just the opposite.

According to the commercials, drinking is the "in" thing to do. TV beer ads glamorize drinking. TV beer ads promote drinking. That's what the ads are designed to do.

According to the Center for Science in the Public Interest, American children see an estimated 90,000 incidents of drinking in TV programs by the age of 21. That doesn't include commercials. Former HHS Secretary Bowen said that three of every 10 adolescents have drinking problems—nearly 5,000,000.

"It doesn't get any better than this," says one of the beer ads. The beer companies assure us that they aren't trying to get young people to drink, only trying to get adults to switch brands.

According to the Center for Science in the Public Interest, television ads for beer are more popular than any other kind of commercials among teenage boys. Forty percent of the high school boys listed one or more beer ads as their favorites. Of the girls surveyed, 12% of girls listed beer and wine ads as their favorites.

Another Gallup Poll showed that a staggering one out of three persons reported that alcohol had caused trouble in their families. *Heavy drinking is involved in 60% of violent crimes, 30% of all suicides, and 80% of fire and drowning accidents. The suicide rate of alcoholics is 30 times that of the general population.*