

KOMU 8 News

State senator trying to stop sale of powdered alcohol

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COLUMBIA - The approval of powdered alcohol was not welcomed with open arms in Missouri.

Sen. David Pearce, R-Warrensburg, pre-filed a bill Thursday to ban the sale and service of powdered alcohol. Senate Bill 797 would make the possession of powdered alcohol a Class C Misdemeanor. Pearce worked with Rep. Patricia Pike, R-Adrian on the bill last year and passed it through the House twice.

Both Pike and Pearce said the substance is hard to regulate because it can come in either powder or capsule form, and it is appealing to young people. Both said distributors sell the product online, which gives easier access to minors for alcohol consumption.

The Johns Hopkins' Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth (CAMY) defined [powdered alcohol](#) as alcohol that has been derived by a form of sugar.

Palcohol was the first product to be approved for selling in the U.S on April 8, 2014. Consumers would add water to the powder to drink it, but the [Palcohol](#) website also provided other ways to use the substance. Soon after, the Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) took away approval, which Palcohol [complied](#) with.

CAMY said a number of public health professionals and state government officials have found the powders could potentially be stronger than standard drinks and can be deadly with too much consumption.

On March 11, 2015, TTB once again Palcohol. As of [March 2015](#), five states have enacted the ban of powdered alcohol sale, twenty-three states have introduced bans, and six states have regulated powdered alcohol to be considered the same as alcoholic products.

The National Alcohol Beverage Control Association's [research](#) found evidence saying powder is a more dangerous way of consuming alcohol.

The Columbia community has started to get in on the fight against powdered alcohol as well. Paul Huesgen, bar manager at Flat Branch Pub and Brewery, said he is in support of the bill.

"It's just the newest trend. Whenever I came to college it was energy drinks, anything you can mix with that," he said. "But craft beer is kind of a niche market, you see the malt scotches and bourbons and whatnot. Powdered alcohol is not really going to be something that affects us too much."

He said he talked to bar managers around the area and none of them have shown an interest in providing the product in their bars.

"I think it has the potential to be dangerous. It sounds like a decent bill to keep things regulated," Huesgen said.