



Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

March 31, 2014

Saskatchewan people lose out with move to private liquor sales

www.sgeu.org

1440 Broadway Avenue
Regina, SK S4P 1E2
(p) 522.8571
1.800.667.5221
(f) 352.1969

1114-22nd Street West
Saskatoon, SK S7M 0S5
(p) 652.1811
1.800.667.9791
(f) 664.7134

33-11th Street West
Prince Albert, SK S6V 3A8
(p) 764.5201
1.800.667.9355
(f) 763.4763

The recent opening of a new private liquor store in Saskatoon signals the erosion of public liquor sales in Saskatchewan, and means less money for important public services like schools, hospitals and roads, according to SGEU.

Public liquor stores generated a net income of \$232 million in 2012 – 2013. “That profit was returned to the people of Saskatchewan, and is used to build stronger communities and help keep families safe and healthy,” says SGEU President Bob Bymoén.

“When money from public liquor sales is siphoned off into private hands, we all lose,” he adds.

In Alberta, the government lost more than \$1.5 billion in revenues after it privatized liquor sales in 1993.

People often believe that privatization means cheaper liquor, but the reality is that private stores charge more. Prices in Saskatchewan's public stores are lower than the Alberta average for 70 per cent of beer products, 76 per cent of spirits, and 86 per cent of wines, according to a comprehensive study by a University of Saskatchewan business professor.

Once the door to private liquor sales is open, there will be a greater risk of underage youth buying alcohol. According to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Canada, private profit is a strong financial incentive not to refuse sales to minors and people who are already drunk.

Communities in Alberta often have to fight attempts to open private liquor stores in inappropriate places, like near schools.

“Saskatchewan people deserve better. There is no good reason to turn liquor sales over to private companies. We stand to lose millions in government revenue. We will pay more, and our communities will be less safe. We call on government to put the public good ahead of private profit and stop privatizing public liquor sales,” Bymoén concludes.

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Bob Bymoén, President
306.775.7219

Susan Dusel, Communications Officer
306.775.7249 (bus) or 306.520.4930 (cell)

Sources: www.sgeu.org/campaigns