

# Yale Daily News

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## State toughens alcohol regulations

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A new Connecticut state law that forbids the possession of alcohol by students under 21 may affect the way the Yale administration enforces its alcohol policy.

An amendment to House Bill No. 5211, "An Act Concerning Underage Drinking" -- which will take effect Oct. 1 -- will make it illegal for minors to possess alcohol on private property and for any adult to knowingly allow a minor to possess alcohol on his or her property. The original bill currently forbids only the serving of alcohol to minors and public possession of alcohol by minors.

Yale College Council President Emery Choi '07 said the state's newfound emphasis on punishment runs counter to the best interests and safety of college students, but Silliman College Master Krauss, who heads the Council of Masters, said the University does not intend to further revise the terms of its current alcohol policy, which underwent a yearlong review that concluded earlier this year. The University's foremost concern will remain the safety and well-being of its students, and students should continue to seek medical care for themselves and their friends when necessary without fear of repercussions, Krauss said.

"I think our approach to this will be very rational and reasonable, but obviously we need to live within the law," she said.

Krauss said Yale officials plan to enforce the existing undergraduate regulations regarding alcohol and social functions more consistently throughout the residential colleges. These regulations include registering parties of more than 20 students, limiting the size of parties to 50 participants and preventing parties from overflowing into public spaces such as courtyards and hallways.

The new legislation -- which passed 123-23 in the House of Representatives and unanimously in the Senate before being signed into law by Gov. M. Jodi Rell on June 2 -- concludes a five-year campaign by the Connecticut Coalition to Stop Underage Drinking to fix the loophole in state law allowing minors to possess alcohol on private property, CCSUD volunteer and Yale surgery professor Linda Degutis NUR '82 EPH '94 said.

Degutis said the legislation is aimed primarily at curbing underage drinking among Connecticut high school students and discouraging adults from allowing students to gather and drink in their homes. The amendment was inspired, she said, by a number of alcohol-related deaths

in the state.

"Often you have events that really highlight the need to do something and to make a difference," Degutis said.

Under the new law, it is also illegal for adults to "knowingly permit a minor to possess alcoholic liquor" and adults are required to "make reasonable efforts to halt such possession," a stipulation that could affect the responsibilities of freshmen counselors.

Tiffany Franke '07, a freshman counselor in Silliman College, said the counselors were briefed about the amendment by administrators and members of the Yale Police Department during their orientation on Thursday. "At this point, it's very up in the air as to how it is going to affect our duties, but they were very serious about how drastic the change in the law was," Franke said.

Krauss said the deans and masters will address their students about the new legislation and its ramifications during registration meetings in the residential colleges. She said the administration will continue to respect the privacy of students.

"Our first assumption is going to be responsible behavior," she said. "Unless you give us reason to think otherwise, really we should all be fine."

Dean of Student Affairs Betty Trachtenberg declined to comment Thursday.

The average age of an undergraduate at Yale is 20, according to the Office of Institutional Research.