

**Oklahoma City law takes aim at teen drinking
Party hosts face fines, jail
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The Oklahoma City Council sent a sobering message Tuesday to adults who host parties where minors are served alcohol.



The council voted 8-1 to approve a social host ordinance. Under the new law, adults who host parties in Oklahoma City where minors are given alcohol will face a fine of \$1,200 and six months in jail.

"We have so many hidden problems that affect young people today that people don't want to talk about until the worst tragedy happens," Ward 7 Councilman Skip Kelly said. "They will sit out there and act like it doesn't happen."

The only council member to vote against the change was Ward 8 Councilman Pat Ryan.

"I felt maybe it was overkill," Ryan said. "We've got ordinances on the books; let's use those if it's an issue."

Ryan said that he is concerned that parents will see the law as a license to make the city responsible for policing behavior at parties.

"I don't think we ought to do anything to diminish the role of the parent to be responsible for their kids," Ryan said.

Police Chief Bill Citty asked for the new law. He said police plan to use it, much like the curfew law, as a tool to break up parties before they become a problem.

Ward 4 Councilman Pete White said he doesn't expect the city will have to make many arrests before the point is made to parents.

White and Kelly also asked that a resolution be placed on next week's council agenda urging the state Legislature to pass a social host law.

State Rep. Rex Duncan, R-Sand Springs, has killed efforts to enact a state social host law the past two years, saying it is a local issue.

Advocates of the law attribute at least one death in the past year to a party where adults provided minors with alcohol.