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## Capitol Alert

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CAPITOL ALERT

### Will Sacramento bars stay open until 4 a.m.? They have that option if bill passes

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Citing nightlife as important for the economy and culture in California, a state senator is again proposing a bill to extend business hours at bars and nightclubs.

State Sen. Scott Wiener, D-San Francisco, on Tuesday introduced a bill for next year that would allow, but not require, six cities to keep establishments open and serve alcohol until 4 a.m., two hours later than currently allowed statewide.

Should the bill pass, it would give cities the option to extend hours but would have to establish a planning process that involves law enforcement, transportation and public safety plans.

The goal is to help boost the state's economy.

“People have this perception that nightlife is only about fun,” he said. “But it’s also about the culture ... of our community.”

Sacramento is among the six cities that expressed interest in the bill, Wiener said. The others are Long Beach, Los Angeles, Oakland, San Francisco and West Hollywood.

Wiener said this version of the bill – co-authored by Assemblyman Miguel Santiago, D-Los Angeles; Assemblyman Jay Obernolte, R-Big Bear Lake; and Assemblyman Reggie Jones Sawyer, D-Los Angeles – has been supported by the mayors of the six interested cities, including Darrell Steinberg in Sacramento.

This idea is not new for Wiener. He introduced a similar statewide bill in February, which he said got great bipartisan support and made it farther than any previous attempts to extend nightlife hours to 4 a.m. Even his predecessor, former state Sen. Mark Leno, tried unsuccessfully to pass similar bills.

California hasn't allowed alcohol sales after 2 a.m. since 1935.

Opposition to the bill quickly surfaced.

The California Alcohol Policy Alliance and Alcohol Justice criticized the timing, given the numerous sexual harassment claims coming from the Capitol. One official with Alcohol Justice called Wiener "tone deaf to the important matters of the day."

"As he talks about the importance of late night alcohol revenue, women in Sacramento are testifying about sexual misconduct by legislators at bars or fundraisers serving alcohol," Sara Cooley Broschart, Alcohol Justice advocacy manager, said in a statement. "The costs of this legislation to women, commuters, and neighbors far outweigh the benefits to a few bar owners. Senator Wiener needs to get his priorities straight."