

# The Ontario government is planning a nearly 300% increase in alcohol retail locations

## Here's why we're concerned

### This will lead to more consumption.

As alcohol consumption increases, so does harm.\* A study in British Columbia found that for every 10% increase in privately owned stores selling alcohol, there was a 1.5% increase in alcohol consumption. With a nearly 300% increase in retail locations, Ontario could see up to a 45% increase in alcohol consumption.



### This will lead to more deaths.

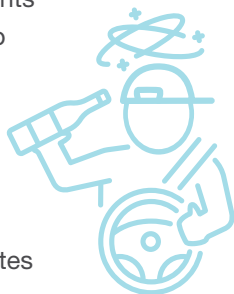
A third B.C. study found that for every 20% increase in privately owned stores selling alcohol, deaths caused by alcohol increased by 3.25%. Based on these numbers, Ontario could see up to a 50% increase in deaths caused by alcohol, from 6,200 per year to 9,100.



Potential increase in deaths caused by alcohol

### Young people will be most affected.

Research has found that adolescents and young adults are more likely to consume alcohol and drive while impaired when the number of retail locations around them increases. Research has also consistently found an association between alcohol availability and rates of violent crime.



### This will impact everyone.

Evidence from the United States suggests that for every 6 additional alcohol outlets, there is an associated increase of 2 motor vehicle collisions and 1 violent assault resulting in hospitalization. Based on these numbers, Ontario could see up to 2,800 more motor vehicle collisions and 1,400 more violent assaults requiring hospitalization.

### This will lead to more hospitalizations.

Ontario has already seen a significant increase in emergency department visits due to alcohol following the introduction of alcohol into supermarkets in 2015.

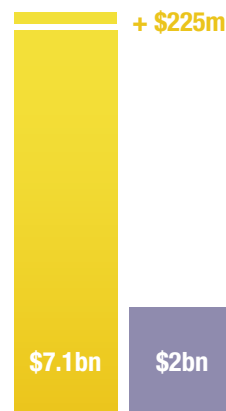
Another B.C. study found that for every 10% increase in privately owned stores selling alcohol, there was a 1.26% increase in alcohol-attributable hospital admissions. Based on these numbers, Ontario could see up to a 40% increase in alcohol-attributable hospitalizations, from 47,500 per year to 65,500. (This is in addition to the nearly 700 emergency department visits due to alcohol every day across the province.)



Potential increase in alcohol-attributable hospitalizations

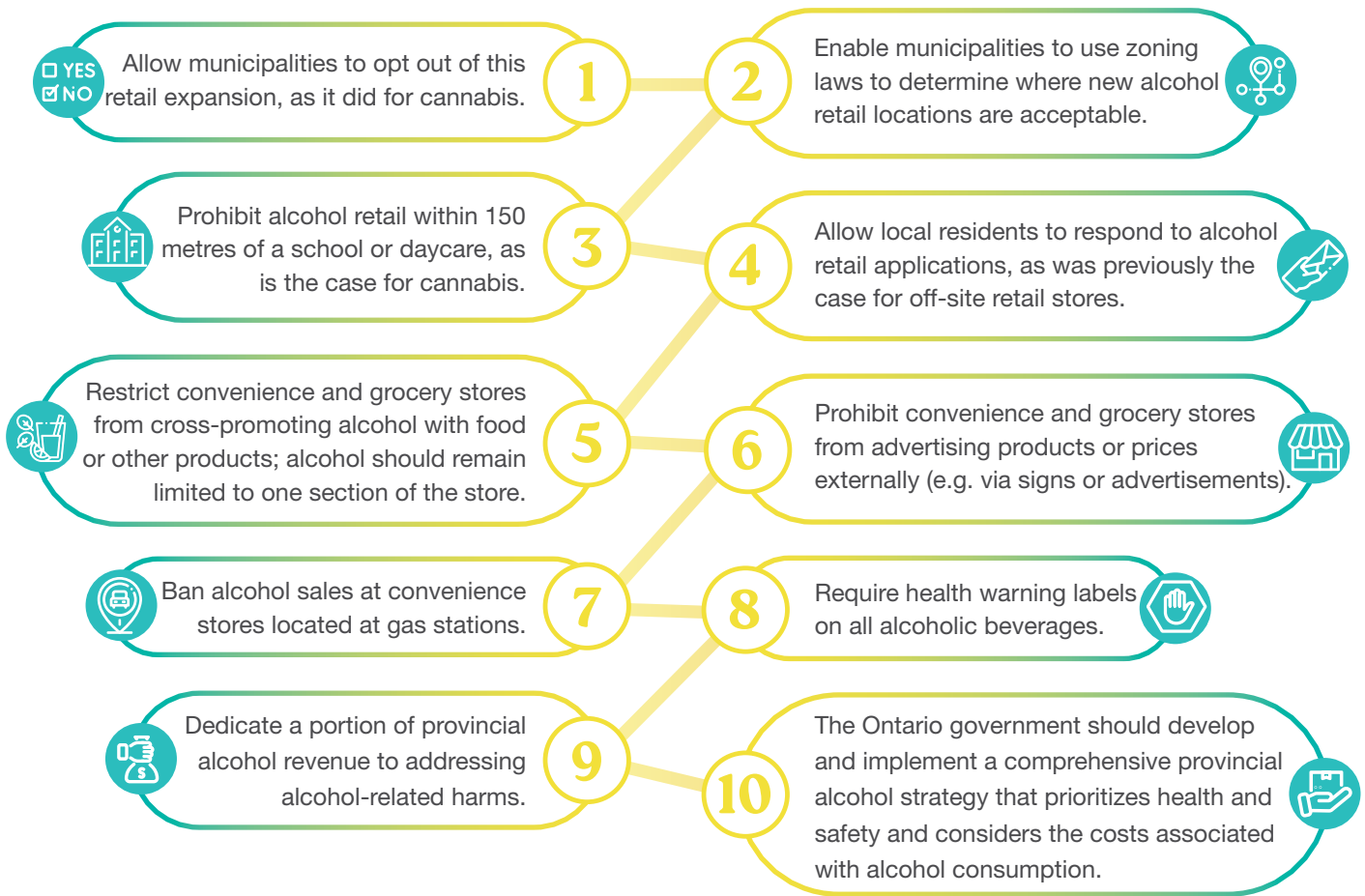
### This will increase economic costs.

Alcohol already costs Ontario more than \$7.1 billion per year in healthcare and criminal justice costs as well as lost productivity – well in excess of the \$2 billion in annual provincial alcohol revenue. This deficit will increase. (This is in addition to the \$225 million the government is giving to the Beer Store to accelerate the alcohol retail expansion.)



## Our recommendations

The best course of action for public health and public safety is to cancel the planned expansion.  
Failing that, we propose the following:



For more information, visit [AlcoholandHealth.ca](http://AlcoholandHealth.ca)

\* Even at small amounts, alcohol use can impact individuals in a number of ways. It is associated with a variety of health harms, both acute and chronic. It is known to play a causal role in more than 200 disease and injury conditions, including liver cirrhosis, cardiovascular disease, alcohol use disorder and at least nine cancers. About a third of Ontarians experience harm as a result of someone else's drinking in any given year. Alcohol-attributable criminal justice costs for Ontario are estimated at \$1.53 billion, and alcohol use accounts for nearly 40% of all criminal justice costs related to substance use due to its role in violent and non-violent crime and impaired driving.

