

Proximity to the southern border and DUI arrests in California

14 September 2020



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A new study from the Prevention Research Center of the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation of DUI arrests in California shows that arrests increase as distance to the southern border decrease, and that this may be due to greater availability of alcohol in the border area.

The article examines trends and [population](#)-level correlates of drinking driving arrests from 2005 to 2017 in California. Relying on [arrest](#) data from the California Department of Justice, and demographic and community data from the U.S. Census, measures of alcohol outlet density, and distance to

the U.S./Mexico border, the authors found that:

- Arrest rates among women and men showed an upward trend until 2008 and decreases after that year
- DUI arrest rates were greater among Hispanics than Whites for younger age groups: 18-29 and 30-39
- DUI arrest rates were positively related to proximity to the California/Mexico border and:
 - a higher percent of bar/pub outlets;
 - a higher percent of Hispanic population;
 - a higher percent of population 18-29, 30-39, and 40-49 years of age;
 - a higher percent of US-born population;
 - a higher percent of population with annual income of \$100,000 or more;
 - a higher percent of population 150% below the [federal poverty line](#); and
 - a higher level of law enforcement activities.

Lead author, Raul Caetano notes that: "These analyses were based on 2.3 million arrest records for 18 years, providing very stable results. Although DUI arrest rates increased as distance to the border decreased, in communities with larger percentages of Hispanics, DUI rates increased as distance to the border increased. This shows that effect of the increased alcohol and drug availability at the [border](#) are complex and influenced by community factors".

Provided by Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation

APA citation: Proximity to the southern border and DUI arrests in California (2020, September 14)
retrieved 16 October 2021 from <https://phys.org/news/2020-09-proximity-southern-border-dui-california.html>

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