



## **Rhode Island Settlement Reflects Homeowner Liability for Serving Alcohol to Those Under 21, Says Providence Lawyer Mark Gemma**

*Mediation handled by Gemma, a personal injury attorney, results in payment to an underage passenger hurt in a vehicle crash after he left a party.*

Providence, RI ([PRWEB](#)) February 12, 2010 -- A recent mediated settlement handled by Providence lawyer [Mark Gemma](#) underscores the liability homeowners face when they allow underage drinking in their homes.

Details of the agreement were sealed, but Gemma, a Providence personal injury attorney representing a claimant in the case, said the mediation revolved around the service of alcohol to two male youths at a house party. The host's parents were home at the time and allegedly approved the underage drinking.

According to facts introduced during the mediation, after leaving the party, the youths were involved in a single-vehicle accident. The driver was intoxicated and his passenger, a 15-year-old, suffered injuries, including a femur fracture that required surgery and the installation of hardware to repair.

Gemma, who represented the passenger, brought auto insurance claims that were settled for the policy limit. The largest portion of the settlement came from the homeowner's policy where the party took place. The homeowners faced liability despite their contention that the injured youth had not been invited to the party and therefore was not their responsibility.

"Parents who host parties for teens need to know that they face serious liability should they allow [underage drinking](#). The law is clear and the price of ignoring it can be high," Gemma said.

In addition to civil liability, adults in Rhode Island can face criminal charges for allowing underage drinking in their homes or anywhere on their property.

In 2008, the Rhode Island state legislature toughened the penalties for such offenses. The penalty for a first offense was kept at a fine of between \$350 and \$1,000, with the potential for imprisonment of up to six months. The maximum prison time for a second offense was doubled to one year, and the maximum sentence for a third offense, considered a felony, was tripled from one to three years.

About Gemma Law Associates, Inc.

[Gemma Law Associates, Inc.](#) is a highly-regarded Providence, Rhode Island law firm that concentrates in personal injury and accident law, including medical malpractice, defective medical products and [vehicle accidents](#) involving bikes, motorcycles, cars and trucks. If you've suffered a serious personal injury, call Gemma Law Associates, Inc. at 401-467-2300 or contact the firm through its Web site at [www.gemmalaw.com](http://www.gemmalaw.com) for a free case evaluation.

###



**Contact Information**

**Mark Gemma**

Gemma Law Associates

<http://www.gemmalaw.com/index.asp>

401-467-2300

**Mike Dayton**

Consultwebs.com, Inc.

<http://www.consultwebs.com/>

919.880.1748

**Online Web 2.0 Version**

You can read the online version of this press release [here](#).