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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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SB 263

Health - Food Service Facilities - Beverage Options With Children's Meals

Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman and Members of the Finance Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss SB 263, Beverage Options with Children's Meals with you. Sugary drinks are the leading source of added sugars consumed by people living in the United States.¹ Consuming sugary drinks sets up children for a lifetime of health challenges that include type 2 diabetes, tooth decay, and heart disease²

SB 263 is a commonsense approach to help all residents make healthier choices. First it defines several terms:

- "Children's Meals" as a combination of Food and Beverage sold together at a single price, intended for children.
- "Default Beverage" as the beverage automatically included as part of the childrens meal.

The default beverage can be:

- Water that is unflavored, unsweetened, and uncarbonated;
- Whole, nonfat, or low fat 1% or 2% pasteurized cow milk with no added flavors or sweeteners, or
- A nondairy beverage that is nutritionally equivalent to fluid cow milk in a serving of 8 ounces or less, or
- A beverage in a serving of 6 ounces or less that consists of 100% fruit juice or vegetable juice or a combination of 100% fruit juice and vegetable juice.

Importantly, nothing in this law prevents parents from purchasing less healthy drinks for a child. This policy would simply make the healthy choice the easy choice.

An amendment has been requested, that I will sponsor:

(D) To support Food Service Facilities in the implementation of this law, the Department of Health shall provide a copy of this law, written informational resources, and employee training resources to all Food Service Facilities. Information shall be provided in both English and Spanish.

This amendment will make sure that the restaurants in the state know of the change and get support with implementation that they need.

I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 263.

¹. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 8th Edition. Published December 2015. https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/resources/2015-2020_Dietary_Guidelines.pdf. Accessed July 31, 2018

² Muth ND, Dietz WH, Magge SN, Johnson RK; AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS; SECTION ON OBESITY; COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION; AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION. Public policies to reduce sugary drink consumption in children and adolescents. *Pediatrics*. 2019; 143(4):e20190282. doi: 10.1542/peds.2019-0282.