

Testimony of Mike Geise
Chief Intellectual Property Counsel, General Mills
In support of Maryland HB1243
Hearing Feb 23, 2024

Dear Chair Wilson and Members of the Economic Matters committee, thank you for having me here to testify today. And thank you Delegate Miller for bringing forward this important legislation.

- My name is Mike Geise, and I am the Chief Intellectual Property Counsel at GMI
- GMI is a Fortune 500 food company based in Minneapolis, MN. We make food the world loves - beloved household brands including Cheerios, Betty Crocker, Old El Paso, Annie's, and pertinent to today's discussion, Cinnamon Toast Crunch, Trix, and other cereals well known to families, including children.
- I'm here today because GMI has been actively working with law enforcement in instances where marijuana edibles have been sold in packaging that illegally utilizes our brands and logos and sometimes adulterated versions of our actual products.
- Sellers of marijuana edibles purchase pre-printed bags with our Company's brand imagery on them, fill the bags with marijuana-laced consumables, and then sell the product to consumers.
 - Between January 2021 and February 2022, poison control centers across the country fielded 2,362 calls regarding THC exposure. Of those reports, 41% involved pediatric patients. An overwhelming 82% of all unintentional exposure cases impacted children.
 - General Mills and our peer food manufacturers spend millions of dollars every year to ensure that our foods meet stringent safety standards. When the public sees our brands on a product, they rightly expect that it is safe to consume. Unfortunately, these marijuana edibles makers do not hold themselves to the same standards.
 - The use of General Mills brands not only gives the false impression that these products come from us, even though GMI would never allow its brands to be used like this, it dangerously misleads the public that there is a reputable food safety assurance that comes with these products.
 - Some state laws already forbid the sale of copycat edibles like these examples.
 - However, there is a loophole a mile wide: it's not illegal to manufacture or sell the empty bags, preprinted and ready to fill. The legislation presented today seeks to help close that loophole by prohibiting the purchase of such bags by those who hold a marijuana license in the state of Maryland.
 - Some online retailers, like Amazon, have been responsive when we flag a problematic vendor or listing on their platform. However others have been less responsive. This includes DHGate, a China-based online retailer. Simply search "mylar bags" on DHGate and you'll see how quickly these bags pop up, copying our brands or those of major candy makers. Written testimony includes screen shots from Wednesday, Feb 21 of this year.
 - By making the purchase of such bags illegal, we shut off the demand for such packaging.
 - As more states set up legal marijuana markets, now is the time to take this extra step to protect your constituents- especially children - from the ingestion risks posed by copycat edibles.

Thank you very much and I welcome your questions.

Screenshot from DHGate.com search results for "mylar bags" – Feb 21, 2024

Office & School & Business & Industrial > Packaging, Printing & Shipping > Packaging bags > wholesale treats bars packaging bag...

wholesale treats bars packaging bags mylar 600mg packages fruity pebbles toast crunch packing empty mylar bag pack

US \$0.17 - 0.36 / Piece

★★★★☆ 2 Reviews | 24 Transactions

USD	\$0.36	\$0.29	\$0.26	\$0.21	\$1
	100 Pieces+	200 Pieces+	400 Pieces+	1000 Pieces+	11

Sale Detail:

Enjoy fast refund service if your first order exceeds Promised Dispatch Date.

New Buyer Dhcoupon Pack \$59 OFF [Claim](#)

Options:

Quantity: 100 Pieces -99495 in Stock (Stock in: CN)

Shipping: Free Shipping to United States Via UPS [More Options](#)
 Estimated delivery time: Mar. 1 and Mar. 6
 Shipping Protection Available with Seal >



wholesale Empty ESKETIT Edibles Packaging mylar bags 4 Types 400MG CRUNCH BERRIES REESE COCOA PUFFS Classic TRIX Gummies Packing bag Smell Proof Zipper Pouch package BAGGIES

US \$0.12 - 0.21 / Piece

2 Reviews | 2 Transactions

[Stock](#) [Customise](#)

USD	\$0.21	\$0.18	\$0.16	\$0.14	\$1
	500 Pieces+	1000 Pieces+	1920 Pieces+	5000 Pieces+	71

Sale Detail:

Enjoy fast refund service if your first order exceeds Promised Dispatch Date.

New Buyer Dhcoupon Pack \$59 OFF [Claim](#)

Options:

Office & School & Business & Industrial > Packaging, Printing & Shipping > Packaging Bags > wholesale USA STOCK prefilled d9 edi...

MADE IN THE USA

D9 gummies with packaging

wholesale USA STOCK prefilled d9 edible gummies packaging bag packages Filled with d9 gummy 500mg 600mg

US \$3.1 - 4.8 / Piece

★★★★★ 50 Reviews | 95 Transactions

USD	\$4.8	\$4.17	\$3.71	\$3.58	\$1
	50 Pieces+	72 Pieces+	100 Pieces+	280 Pieces+	51

Sale Detail:

Enjoy fast refund service if your first order exceeds Promised Dispatch Date.

New Buyer Dhcoupon Pack \$59 OFF [Claim](#)