



**House Ways & Means Committee
February 27, 2024**

**House Bill 1072
Sales and Use Tax - Alcoholic Beverages - Rate Alteration
Support**

NCADD-Maryland supports House Bill 1072. We have long-supported the use of the State’s taxing authority to influence the alcohol purchasing and drinking practices of people, especially to reduce access and consumption of alcohol by youth.

There is strong scientific evidence that increasing the cost of alcohol by raising alcohol taxes is an effective strategy for reducing excessive alcohol consumption and related harms.¹ The World Health Organization has called on countries around the world to use taxes to avert deaths related to alcohol and sugary beverages.² They further state that research shows that taxing alcohol helps reduce the consumption of alcohol and at the same time, prevent injuries and diseases such as cancers, diabetes and heart diseases.

We all recall that during the worst of the pandemic, stores selling alcohol were considered among those essential businesses allowed to stay open and serve customers. We also know that it was because of the shut-down that the delivery of alcohol was expanded. Given the ever-increasing access we have prioritized as a society, making sure we are using the tools we have to discourage underage and binge drinking is smart policy.

We urge a favorable report on House Bill 1072.

¹ <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/alcohol-excessive-consumption-increasing-alcohol-taxes.html>

² <https://www.paho.org/en/news/6-12-2023-who-calls-countries-increase-taxes-alcohol-and-sugary-sweetened-beverages#:~:text=Research%20shows%20that%20taxing%20alcohol,cancers%2C%20diabetes%20and%20heart%20diseases.>