

HOUSE BILL 1556

C2

6lr3542

By: **Delegate Ross**

Introduced and read first time: February 13, 2026

Assigned to: Health

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Business Regulation – Sugary Beverage Advertisements – Warning Labels**

3 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from placing an advertisement for a sugary
4 beverage on certain property unless the advertisement includes a certain warning;
5 and generally relating to advertisements for sugary beverages.

6 BY adding to

7 Article – Business Regulation

8 Section 19–110

9 Annotated Code of Maryland

10 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
12 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

13 **Article – Business Regulation**

14 **19–110.**

15 **(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**
16 **INDICATED.**

17 **(2) “DIVISION” MEANS THE CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION OF**
18 **THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.**

19 **(3) (I) “NONNUTRITIVE SWEETENER” MEANS A NONNUTRITIVE**
20 **SUBSTANCE SUITABLE FOR CONSUMPTION THAT HUMANS PERCEIVE AS SWEET AND**
21 **CONTAINS FEWER THAN FIVE CALORIES PER SERVING.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(II) "NONNUTRITIVE SWEETENER" INCLUDES:

1. ASPARTAME;
2. ACESULFAME-K;
3. NEOTAME, SACCHARIN;
4. SUCRALOSE, STEVIA; AND
5. OTHER ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS.

(III) "NONNUTRITIVE SWEETENER" DOES NOT INCLUDE SUGAR.

(4) "SUGARY BEVERAGE" MEANS A BEVERAGE, WHETHER CARBONATED OR NONCARBONATED, THAT IS INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION AND CONTAINS ADDED SUGARS OR NONNUTRITIVE SWEETENERS.

(B) A PERSON MAY NOT PLACE AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR A SUGARY BEVERAGE ON PROPERTY OWNED BY THE STATE, A COUNTY, OR A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION UNLESS THE ADVERTISEMENT INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING WARNING LABEL: "WARNING: DRINKING BEVERAGES WITH ADDED SUGAR CAN CONTRIBUTE TO OBESITY, TYPE 2 DIABETES, AND TOOTH DECAY. NOT RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN. MARYLAND STATE HEALTH WARNING."

(C) THE WARNING LABEL REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION SHALL:

(1) BE IN BOLD TYPEFACE;

(2) BE PRINTED IN A BOX, VISUALLY SEPARATING THE WARNING LABEL FROM THE OTHER CONTENT IN THE ADVERTISEMENT; AND

(3) BE HIGHLY VISIBLE TO A VIEWER OF THE ADVERTISEMENT.

(D) (1) THE DIVISION MAY IMPOSE A CIVIL PENALTY NOT TO EXCEED \$1,000 ON A PERSON THAT VIOLATES THIS SECTION.

(2) EACH DAY AN ADVERTISEMENT THAT VIOLATES THIS SECTION REMAINS ON PROPERTY OWNED BY THE STATE, A COUNTY, OR A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION IS A SEPARATE VIOLATION.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2026.