

SENATE BILL 594

A3

6lr1313

By: **Senators Beidle and Gile**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2026

Assigned to: Finance

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: March 3, 2026

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Cannabis – Advertising – Alterations**

3 FOR the purpose of repealing certain criteria for a certain prohibition on cannabis
4 advertising that targets minors; authorizing a standard dispensary to place certain
5 exterior signage for certain limited purposes under certain circumstances; requiring
6 the Maryland Cannabis Administration to accept certain advertising audience
7 composition data and ~~establish~~ develop by regulation ~~an alternative method for~~
8 ~~determining audience composition~~ a process for accepting a certain attestation from
9 a certain person regarding audience composition; providing a certain exception to a
10 prohibition on the third-party use of certain distinguishing characteristics of a
11 cannabis licensee for advertisements; and generally relating to cannabis advertising.

12 ~~BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,~~
13 ~~Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis~~
14 ~~Section 36–901 and 36–903~~
15 ~~Annotated Code of Maryland~~
16 ~~(2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)~~

17 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
18 Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis
19 Section 36–901 and 36–902
20 Annotated Code of Maryland
21 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

22 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis
 2 Section 36–903
 3 Annotated Code of Maryland
 4 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

7 **Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis**

8 36–901.

9 (a) In this subtitle, “advertisement” ~~THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE~~
 10 ~~MEANINGS INDICATED.~~

11 ~~(b) (1) “ADVERTISEMENT”~~ means the publication, dissemination, or
 12 circulation of any auditory, visual, digital, oral, or written matter, which is directly or
 13 indirectly calculated to induce the sale of cannabis or any cannabis–related product or
 14 service.

15 ~~(b) (2)~~ “Advertisement” does not include packaging or labeling.

16 ~~(c) “THERAPEUTIC OR MEDICAL CLAIM” MEANS A CLAIM THAT EXPLICITLY~~
 17 ~~STATES A PRODUCT CAN DIAGNOSE, TREAT, MITIGATE, CURE, OR PREVENT A~~
 18 ~~DISEASE OR CONDITION.~~

19 36–902.

20 An advertisement for cannabis and cannabis products or cannabis–related services
 21 that makes therapeutic or medical claims shall:

22 (1) be supported by competent and reliable scientific evidence; and

23 (2) include information on the most serious and most common side effects
 24 or risks associated with the use of cannabis.

25 36–903.

26 (a) (1) An advertisement for a cannabis licensee, cannabis product, or
 27 cannabis–related service may not:

28 (i) violate Title 13, Subtitle 3 of the Commercial Law Article;

29 (ii) directly [or indirectly] target individuals under the age of 21
 30 years;

1 (iii) contain a design, an illustration, a picture, or a representation
2 that:

3 1. targets [or is attractive to] minors, including a cartoon
4 character, a mascot, or any other depiction that is commonly used to market products to
5 minors;

6 2. displays the use of cannabis, including the consumption,
7 smoking, or vaping of cannabis;

8 3. encourages or promotes cannabis for use as an intoxicant;
9 or

10 4. is obscene;

11 (iv) engage in advertising by means of television, radio, Internet,
12 mobile application, social media, or other electronic communication, event sponsorship, or
13 print publication, unless at least 85% of the audience is reasonably expected to be at least
14 21 years old as determined [by reliable and current audience composition data] **IN**
15 **ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION;** or

16 (v) except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, engage in
17 advertising by means of placing an advertisement on the side of a building or another
18 publicly visible location of any form, including a sign, a poster, a placard, a device, a graphic
19 display, an outdoor billboard, or a freestanding signboard.

20 (2) **(I)** A cannabis business may place exterior signage on the premises
21 of the business for the limited purpose of identifying the business to the public.

22 **(II) SUBJECT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (III) OF THIS PARAGRAPH,**
23 **THE HOLDER OF A STANDARD DISPENSARY LICENSE MAY PLACE EXTERIOR**
24 **SIGNAGE, INCLUDING A POSTER OR A PLACARD THAT IS ATTACHED TO THE**
25 **BUILDING, OR A FREESTANDING SIGNBOARD THAT IS IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO**
26 **THE ENTRANCE OF THE LICENSED PREMISES, FOR THE LIMITED PURPOSE OF:**

27 **1. ~~IDENTIFYING ITSELF AS A LICENSED CANNABIS~~**
28 **~~BUSINESS AND A CANNABIS TRUSTED SOURCE;~~**

29 **~~2.~~ PROVIDING CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE**
30 **DISPENSARY, INCLUDING A WEBSITE ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, E-MAIL ADDRESS,**
31 **OR QUICK RESPONSE (QR) CODE;**

32 **~~3.~~ 2. PROVIDING CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE**
33 **ADMINISTRATION;**

1 ~~4.~~ **3.** PROVIDING INFORMATION ON WHAT TO DO IF AN
2 ADVERSE EVENT OCCURS, INCLUDING:

3 A. AN ADVISORY TO CALL 9-1-1 IN AN EMERGENCY;

4 B. CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE MARYLAND
5 POISON CENTER; AND

6 C. CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE PET POISON
7 HELPLINE; AND

8 ~~5.~~ **4.** IDENTIFYING AN OWNERSHIP OR LICENSURE
9 DESIGNATION, AS APPROVED BY THE ADMINISTRATION.

10 (III) EXTERIOR SIGNAGE UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS
11 PARAGRAPH MAY NOT EXCEED:

12 1. 900 SQUARE INCHES FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL EXTERIOR
13 SIGN; OR

14 2. 1,200 SQUARE INCHES TOTAL FOR ALL EXTERIOR
15 SIGNAGE.

16 (3) TO DETERMINE WHETHER AN ADVERTISEMENT OR A PROPOSED
17 ADVERTISEMENT MEETS THE AUDIENCE COMPOSITION REQUIREMENTS UNDER
18 PARAGRAPH (1)(IV) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL:

19 (I) ACCEPT THE MOST RECENT AND READILY AVAILABLE
20 AUDIENCE COMPOSITION DATA FROM THE TELEVISION, RADIO, INTERNET, MOBILE
21 APPLICATION, SOCIAL MEDIA, OR OTHER ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION, ~~EVENT~~
22 ~~SPONSORSHIP~~, OR PRINT PUBLICATION ENTITY WITH WHICH THE CANNABIS
23 LICENSEE ADVERTISES OR PROPOSES TO ADVERTISE; AND

24 (II) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2027, ADOPT REGULATIONS
25 ~~ESTABLISHING AT LEAST ONE ALTERNATIVE METHOD FOR DETERMINING AUDIENCE~~
26 ~~COMPOSITION THAT DEVELOP A PROCESS TO ACCEPT AN ATTESTATION REGARDING~~
27 AUDIENCE COMPOSITION FROM AN ORGANIZER OR HOST OF AN EVENT THAT A
28 CANNABIS BUSINESS PROPOSES TO ADVERTISE AT THROUGH AN EVENT
29 SPONSORSHIP.

30 (b) (1) (i) Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, each
31 cannabis-related website shall employ a neutral age-screening mechanism that verifies
32 that the user is at least 21 years old, including by using an age-gate, age-screen, or age
33 verification mechanism before the user may access or view any content and before the

1 website may collect the user's address, e-mail address, phone number, or contact
2 information to disseminate advertisements.

3 (ii) If a website is appropriate for a qualifying patient who is under
4 the age of 21 years, the website shall provide an alternative screening mechanism for the
5 qualifying patient.

6 (2) An advertisement placed on social media or a mobile application shall
7 include a notification that an individual must be at least 21 years old to view the content.

8 (3) The provisions of this subtitle applicable to cannabis licensees may not
9 be avoided by hiring or contracting with a third-party, or outsourcing advertisements that
10 do not comply with this subtitle.

11 (4) (I) [A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS
12 PARAGRAPH, A cannabis licensee may not allow the use of the licensee's trademarks,
13 brands, names, locations, or other distinguishing characteristics for third-party use for
14 advertisements that do not comply with this subtitle.

15 (II) ~~THE USE OF TRADEMARKS, BRANDS, NAMES, LOCATIONS,~~
16 ~~OR OTHER DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS IN A NEWS ARTICLE, INTERVIEW,~~
17 ~~DOCUMENTARY, OR OTHER EDITORIAL CONTENT THAT IS NOT INTENDED AS~~
18 ~~COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE PROHIBITION UNDER~~
19 ~~SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH~~ TRADEMARK, BRAND, NAME, LOCATION,
20 OR OTHER DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTIC OF A CANNABIS BUSINESS MAY BE
21 USED IN A NEWS ARTICLE, INTERVIEW, DOCUMENTARY, OR OTHER EDITORIAL
22 CONTENT IF THE CANNABIS BUSINESS OR A THIRD PARTY ACTING ON BEHALF OF A
23 CANNABIS BUSINESS DOES NOT PROVIDE COMPENSATION OR ANYTHING ELSE OF
24 VALUE TO THE PUBLISHER OF THE NEWS ARTICLE, INTERVIEW, DOCUMENTARY, OR
25 OTHER EDITORIAL CONTENT.

26 (c) The Administration shall adopt regulations to establish procedures for the
27 enforcement of this section.

28 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
29 1, 2026.