

SENATE BILL 594

A3

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By: **Senators Beidle and Gile**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2026

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

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 by regulation an alternative method for determining
8 audience composition; providing a certain exception to a prohibition on the
9 third-party use of certain distinguishing characteristics of a cannabis licensee for
10 advertisements; and generally relating to cannabis advertising.

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

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

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

Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis

24 36–901.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



3 **(B) (1) “ADVERTISEMENT”** means the publication, dissemination, or
4 circulation of any auditory, visual, digital, oral, or written matter, which is directly or
5 indirectly calculated to induce the sale of cannabis or any cannabis-related product or
6 service.

7 [b] (2) "Advertisement" does not include packaging or labeling.

8 (C) "THERAPEUTIC OR MEDICAL CLAIM" MEANS A CLAIM THAT EXPLICITLY
9 STATES A PRODUCT CAN DIAGNOSE, TREAT, MITIGATE, CURE, OR PREVENT A
10 DISEASE OR CONDITION.

11 36-902.

12 An advertisement for cannabis and cannabis products or cannabis-related services
13 that makes therapeutic or medical claims shall:

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

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

17 36-903.

18 (a) (1) An advertisement for a cannabis licensee, cannabis product, or
19 cannabis-related service may not:

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

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

23 (iii) contain a design, an illustration, a picture, or a representation
24 that:

1 4. is obscene;

2 (iv) engage in advertising by means of television, radio, Internet,
3 mobile application, social media, or other electronic communication, event sponsorship, or
4 print publication, unless at least 85% of the audience is reasonably expected to be at least
5 21 years old as determined [by reliable and current audience composition data] IN
6 ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION; or

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

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

13 (II) SUBJECT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (III) OF THIS PARAGRAPH,
14 THE HOLDER OF A STANDARD DISPENSARY LICENSE MAY PLACE EXTERIOR
15 SIGNAGE, INCLUDING A POSTER OR A PLACARD THAT IS ATTACHED TO THE
16 BUILDING, OR A FREESTANDING SIGNBOARD THAT IS IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO
17 THE ENTRANCE OF THE LICENSED PREMISES, FOR THE LIMITED PURPOSE OF:

18 1. IDENTIFYING ITSELF AS A LICENSED CANNABIS
19 BUSINESS AND A CANNABIS TRUSTED SOURCE;

20 2. PROVIDING CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE
21 DISPENSARY, INCLUDING A WEBSITE ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, E-MAIL ADDRESS,
22 OR QUICK RESPONSE (QR) CODE;

23 3. PROVIDING CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE
24 ADMINISTRATION;

25 4. PROVIDING INFORMATION ON WHAT TO DO IF AN
26 ADVERSE EVENT OCCURS, INCLUDING:

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

28 B. CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE MARYLAND
29 POISON CENTER; AND

30 C. CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE PET POISON
31 HELPLINE; AND

1 **5. IDENTIFYING AN OWNERSHIP OR LICENSURE**
2 **DESIGNATION, AS APPROVED BY THE ADMINISTRATION.**

3 **(III) EXTERIOR SIGNAGE UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS**
4 **PARAGRAPH MAY NOT EXCEED:**

5 **1. 900 SQUARE INCHES FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL EXTERIOR**
6 **SIGN; OR**

7 **2. 1,200 SQUARE INCHES TOTAL FOR ALL EXTERIOR**
8 **SIGNAGE.**

9 **(3) TO DETERMINE WHETHER AN ADVERTISEMENT OR A PROPOSED**
10 **ADVERTISEMENT MEETS THE AUDIENCE COMPOSITION REQUIREMENTS UNDER**
11 **PARAGRAPH (1)(IV) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL:**

12 **(I) ACCEPT THE MOST RECENT AND READILY AVAILABLE**
13 **AUDIENCE COMPOSITION DATA FROM THE TELEVISION, RADIO, INTERNET, MOBILE**
14 **APPLICATION, SOCIAL MEDIA, OR OTHER ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION, EVENT**
15 **SPONSORSHIP, OR PRINT PUBLICATION ENTITY WITH WHICH THE CANNABIS**
16 **LICENSEE ADVERTISES OR PROPOSES TO ADVERTISE; AND**

17 **(II) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2027, ADOPT REGULATIONS**
18 **ESTABLISHING AT LEAST ONE ALTERNATIVE METHOD FOR DETERMINING AUDIENCE**
19 **COMPOSITION.**

20 (b) (1) (i) Subject to subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, each
21 cannabis-related website shall employ a neutral age-screening mechanism that verifies
22 that the user is at least 21 years old, including by using an age-gate, age-screen, or age
23 verification mechanism before the user may access or view any content and before the
24 website may collect the user's address, e-mail address, phone number, or contact
25 information to disseminate advertisements.

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

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

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

5 (II) THE USE OF TRADEMARKS, BRANDS, NAMES, LOCATIONS,
6 OR OTHER DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS IN A NEWS ARTICLE, INTERVIEW,
7 DOCUMENTARY, OR OTHER EDITORIAL CONTENT THAT IS NOT INTENDED AS
8 COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE PROHIBITION UNDER
9 SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

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

12 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
13 1, 2026.