



Testimony of Jensen N. Jose
Regulatory Counsel, Center for Science in the Public Interest
Hearing on Maryland HB1208

March 25, 2025

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Jensen Jose, and I am a Maryland Resident as well as Regulatory Counsel for Food Additives and Supplements at the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI). CSPI is an independent, science-based non-profit that has worked for more than 50 years to improve the food system and advocate for consumer health. We do not accept corporate donations.

I strongly urge you to support House Bill 1208, which would prohibit the manufacture and sale of foods in Maryland containing four chemicals with documented health risks.

The dangers of these additives are clear and long-standing:

- **Potassium bromate** was found to cause cancer by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1992.
- **Propylparaben** was linked to reproductive toxicity and hormone disruption by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in 2004.
- **Brominated vegetable oil (BVO)** was linked to cardiac toxicity and bioaccumulation by the WHO in 1970. The FDA finally banned it in 2024, 54 years after risks were first identified.
- **Red 3** was identified as an animal carcinogen by the FDA in 1990 and subsequently banned from food in the U.S. in 2025, 35 years later.

Despite well-established risks, the FDA has been slow to act to protect consumer safety. It took the agency 35 years to ban Red 3 after recognizing its cancer risk. Must we wait decades longer for the FDA – which now faces significant budget cuts and staff layoffs – to ban other chemicals that we know are toxic?

States are stepping up to ban harmful food additives. In 2023, California banned the four additives targeted here – a prohibition that will go into effect in 2027. At least a dozen other states have introduced similar legislation to ban these chemicals.

By passing HB1208, Maryland can take decisive action to protect public health. I urge you to support this critical legislation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jensen N. Jose
Regulatory Counsel
Center for Science in the Public Interest