



Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

Testimony in Support of HB 1469

Submitted to the Honorable Members of the Ways and Means Committee

Position: Support

The Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children (MDAEOYC) supports HB 1469- Taxes – Sugary Beverage Distributor Tax 2 (For Our Kids Act)

March 4, 2025

MDAEOYC is a professional association of 1,700 early childhood educators, allied professionals, and families. We promote high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood education practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.

As a current member of the MDAEOYC Public Policy Committee and former childcare Director/Owner for 50 years I would like to express the strong support of the members of our Association. These are our key points:

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1469

Dear Members of the Ways and Means and Economic Matters Committees,

I am writing to express our support for House Bill 1469, the "Taxes – Sugary Beverage Distributor Tax (For Our Kids Act)."

This bill represents a significant step forward in promoting public health and supporting essential educational programs in our state.

Health Benefits: The consumption of sugary beverages is a well-documented contributor to various health issues, including obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. By imposing a tax on these products, HB 1469 aims to reduce their consumption, thereby encouraging healthier dietary choices among our residents. This proactive approach can lead to a healthier population and reduce long-term healthcare costs associated with diet-related diseases.

Support for Education: The revenue generated from the Sugary Beverage Distributor Tax will be allocated to the Healthy School Meals for All Fund and the Child Care Scholarship Program. These funds are crucial for ensuring that all children have access to nutritious meals, which are essential for their physical and cognitive development. It also contributes to funding for income eligible families to access

high quality child care. Proper nutrition is directly linked to improved academic performance and overall well-being, making this investment in our children's future invaluable.

Economic Impact: While some may argue that this tax could negatively impact businesses, it is important to consider the broader economic benefits. Healthier communities can lead to increased productivity and reduced healthcare costs, which ultimately benefit the economy. Additionally, the funds generated will support vital educational programs including the Child Care Scholarship program, creating and supporting a more educated and capable workforce for the future and supporting our current workforce now.

Environmental Considerations: Reducing the consumption of sugary beverages can also have positive environmental impacts. These products often come in single-use plastic containers, contributing to environmental pollution. By discouraging their consumption, we can reduce plastic waste and promote more sustainable practices.

In conclusion, House Bill 1469 is a well-rounded piece of legislation that addresses public health, supports education, and has positive economic and environmental implications. We urge the committee to support this bill and take a significant step towards a healthier and more prosperous future for our state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Flora Gee, M. Ed.
Public Policy
Regional Officer, Prince George's County
Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

If you have any questions, please contact: Stephanie Schaefer, PhD. Program Coordinator, at stephanie.schaefer@mdaeyc.org or 240-441-3280 or Flora Gee, flora.gee@mdaeyc.org or 240-375-0208.