



House Ways and Means Committee
House Economic Matters Committee
March 6, 2025

House Bill 1469 – *Taxes – Sugary Beverage Distributor Tax (For Our Kids Act)*
POSITION: OPPOSE

The Maryland State Licensed Beverage Association (MSLBA), which consists of approximately 850 Maryland businesses holding alcoholic beverage licenses (restaurants, bars, taverns, and package stores), opposes House Bill 1469.

This legislation would create a 2 cents per ounce tax for sugary beverages sold to retailers, for sale to consumers. Small businesses are struggling from the impact of higher food, beverage, labor, electricity, and other operating costs. Our members already pay higher Maryland sales tax on alcohol beverages (9%). This tax would increase the price of soft drinks, as well as mixers for alcohol beverages. Retailers would have no choice but to raise these prices to stay afloat.

Unfortunately, Maryland is not exempt from the impact of cross-border sales. Higher prices could result in fewer sales, and lost jobs, especially when so many Maryland small businesses are in close proximity to neighboring states where customers can choose to dine and shop to avoid higher prices resulting from this tax.

For these reasons, MSLBA strongly opposes House Bill 1469.

For more information contact MSLBA Legislative Chairs:

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