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Testimony on House Bill 1469
Taxes - Sugary Beverage Distributor Tax (For Our Kids Act)
House Way and Means Committee

Position: Favorable

Maryland Nonprofits is the state-wide association of more than 1500 nonprofit organizations and institutions serving families and communities in every region of our state. We urge you to support House Bill 1469, to protect the health of children (and adults), while providing additional resources the state will badly need to sustain our safety net programs in view the draconian cuts being proposed under the Trump administration.

Our members see first-hand the unmet needs of people in every county, including the lack of accessible and affordable childcare, and other impediments that in the wealthiest state in the nation too often trap families in or near poverty. Nonprofits suffered along with the rest of the private sector throughout the pandemic, with disruption of operations, revenue losses, and workforce shortages. Their financial reserves, in most cases less than adequate before the pandemic, have worsened. Meeting the needs of lower income Maryland families in these times requires more state investment, not cutbacks that are on the table.

Excessive sugary drink consumption is linked to 50,000 deaths annually and significantly increases the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and dental cavities. Communities most affected by these conditions urgently need policies that promote healthier outcomes. The **For Our Kids Act** will allocate critical funds to these communities, ensuring our children and our state have a brighter future.

Specifically, the **For Our Kids Act** will:

- Guarantee healthy school meals for every student, ensuring no child goes hungry and all students have access to nutritious meals.
- Secure funding for child-care scholarships, making child-care more affordable and accessible for working families.
- Promote better health across Maryland by investing in policies that reduce diet-related diseases and improve overall well-being.

WE urge you to give House Bill 1469 a favorable report

