



Legislation Text

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Introduced by: Councilmember Welch

A Resolution Entitled

A Council Resolution concerning **Request for Federal Action - Sugary Beverage Warning Labels**

For the purpose of calling on Congress, and the Surgeon General, to take steps to ensure that all Americans are fully informed of the health risks inherent in sugar sweetened beverage consumption by requiring that health warning labels be placed on sugar sweetened beverage containers nationwide.

Recitals

Sugar sweetened beverages, or SSBs, have been shown time and again to contribute to a variety of health risks, especially for young people. SSBs play a significant role in our national obesity epidemic - adults who drink one SSB a day are 27% more likely to be overweight or obese, and children who have a serving of soda a day are an even worse 55% more likely to be overweight or obese. These beverages also dramatically increase the risk of diabetes and heart disease, disrupt children's ability to absorb vital nutrients, and nearly double the risk of cavities in young people.

Despite this evidence, studies show that nearly half of all kids under 11 drink SSBs on a daily basis. Too many parents and children simply do not understand how harmful SSBs can be.

Not enough is being done to educate parents about the risks of SSB consumption. One solution to this problem is to inform potential SSB consumers about the harmful effects of SSBs through warning labels on sodas and similar products. This model has been proven effective in reducing cigarette consumption and could perform a similar educational function for SSBs.

There is evidence that these warning labels would in fact help to change attitudes about sugary beverages. According to a recent study in the journal *Pediatrics*: "Warning labels led parents to believe that SSBs were significantly less healthy, less likely to make their child feel energized, less likely to help their child to focus, and more likely to increase their child's risk of weight gain, heart disease, and diabetes relative to both the calorie label and control groups".

SSB consumption is a national problem, that will likely require a national response. Children throughout our nation are being exposed to health risks that were not previously well understood, they and their parents deserve to have more information about how harmful SSBs can be available to them before they decide to purchase these beverages. Since the market for these beverages is national in scope, only Federal action could definitively ensure that all risky sugary beverages carry the proper health warnings on them.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of Baltimore, That the Council calls on Congress, and the Surgeon General, to take steps to ensure that all Americans are fully informed of the health risks inherent in

sugar sweetened beverage consumption by requiring that health warning labels be placed on sugar sweetened beverage containers nationwide.

And be it further resolved, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the United States Surgeon General, the Honorable Members of the Maryland House and Senate Delegations to the 114th Congress, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.