

..Number

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..Version

ORIGINAL

..Reference

..Sponsor

MEMBERS SCHMELING AND KOMES

..Title

Resolution expressing the City of Milwaukee Youth Council's concerns and opposition to the sale and marketing of Pabst *Blast* and other high-alcohol content malt beverages.

..Analysis

This resolution expresses the City of Milwaukee Youth Council's opposition to the sale and marketing of Pabst Blast and other high alcohol malt beverages.

..Body

Whereas, The Pabst Brewing Company of Woodbridge, Illinois, now offers a new flavored malt beverage, *Blast* by Colt 45, with an alcohol concentration of 12% in brightly-colored 23.5 ounce cans with fruit flavors of grape, strawberry lemonade, strawberry watermelon and blueberry pomegranate; and

Whereas, Distributors have been informed by the Pabst Brewing Company that the target market for all size containers of *Blast* is ages 21 to 29; and

Whereas, Company representatives have publicly outlined a marketing strategy focused on the Hip Hop and urban market using a variety of media and strategies including radio and urban magazines, music and cultural festivals, and through leveraging contacts with local DJs through *Blast* spokesperson rapper Snoop Dogg and other celebrities especially popular to an audience under the legal drinking age; and

Whereas, Carbonated malt beverages are designed to be consumed cold and, once a consumer opens a can, the beverage quickly loses its optimal temperature and carbonation; and

Whereas, According to the National Institute of Health, consumption of a single 23.5 ounce can of *Blast* within a 2-hour period provides an amount of alcohol equivalent to 4.7 regular servings of alcohol and constitutes "binge" drinking, typically raising blood alcohol levels to 0.8% concentration or more; and

Whereas, Consumption of a single 23.5 ounce can of *Blast* results in harmful intoxication, impairment of brain function, reduced reaction time, loss of motor skills, slurred speech and increases the risk of serious or fatal injury and death, violence, unintended pregnancy, transmission of HIV and sexually transmitted infections; and

Whereas, These health risks pose a particular threat to youth given that about 90% of the alcohol consumed by Americans under age 21 is while binge drinking, and the proportion of binge drinking prevalence for 18 to 24-year olds is more than 25%; and

Whereas, *Blast's* packaging and marketing implicitly represent that the product is fit to be consumed as a single-serving, ready-to-drink alcohol beverage; and

Whereas, The Attorneys General of at least 15 states and attorneys for other jurisdictions across the United States have joined to urge Pabst Brewing Company to significantly reduce the alcohol content in single-service containers to eliminate the public health safety risks posed by this "binge-in-a can" product and to take steps to ensure that the marketing of Blast does not expressly or impliedly target an audience that is under the legal drinking age; and

Whereas, The City of Milwaukee, through its Common Council, licenses and regulates the sale and consumption of alcohol beverages subject to state statutes and rules; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, By the Youth Council of the City of Milwaukee, that the Youth Council opposes the sale and marketing of Pabst *Blast* by Colt 45 and similar high alcohol, single-service products; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Youth Council urges the Mayor and the Common Council to publicly oppose the sale and marketing of high-alcohol content, single-service malt beverages such as Pabst *Blast* which targets a young population through marketing designed to attract the interest not only of persons 21 or older, but also persons who have not reached legal drinking age; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Youth Council urges the Mayor, the Common Council and the Inter-governmental Division-Department of Administration to seek legislation authorizing the City to regulate the marketing and sale of high-alcohol malt beverages within the City; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Youth Council urges the Licenses Committee of the Common Council to consider the sale of products such as Pabst *Blast* that present a high risk of harmful binge drinking when considering the operational plans of Class A alcohol retail establishment license applications; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Youth Council urges Attorney General J. B. Van Hollen and the Wisconsin Department of Justice to join with the Attorney General for the State of Maryland and others in urging the Pabst Brewing Company to reduce the number of servings of alcohol presented to consumers in single-service containers and to take steps to ensure that marketing of Pabst Blast and similar products does not expressly or impliedly target an audience that is under the legal drinking age.

..Requestor

..Drafter

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Richard L. Withers

6/6/11