



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1002

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation which would limit the sale of alcopops to liquor stores.

By Council Members Jackson, Koppell, Wills, Dickens, Ferreras, Fidler, James, Lander, Mendez, Rose, Vann, Williams and Vallone

Whereas, According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, approximately 5,000 young people under the age of 21 die as a result of underage drinking each year, including approximately 1,900 who are killed in automobile crashes; and

Whereas, In New York City, it is estimated that alcohol causes 1,500 deaths every year, making it the third-leading cause of preventable death; and

Whereas, According to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, two out of five adolescents who begin drinking before age 15 will become dependent on alcohol within their lifetimes; and

Whereas, Approximately one out of eight of individuals between 18 and 20 years are already alcohol dependent; and

Whereas, The Department asserts that many younger drinkers initiate alcohol use through consuming “alcopops,” which are premixed, sweet, carbonated flavored malt beverages with alcohol volumes as high as 12 percent; and

Whereas, These products are generally advertised with youth appeal, as they are often colorful, available in many fruity flavors and resemble soft drinks; and

Whereas, More than two-thirds of high school aged students reported drinking alcopops in the past year; and

Whereas, While alcopops are often consumed by teenage girls and underage drinkers, these products have the effect of serving as a bridge to other alcoholic products which are less sweet; and

Whereas, Throughout New York City, more than 20 percent of high school students who drink, report purchasing or obtaining their alcohol from retail stores, including delis, grocery stores and mini-marts, where these products are sold alongside beer, tea and sports drinks; and

Whereas, Because of its high alcohol content, New York State should not allow the sale of alcopops at the same place where non-alcoholic beverages are sold since youth are present at these locations; and

Whereas, New York State must protect its children and deter underage alcohol consumption by restricting the sale of alcopops to stores with a liquor license; and

Whereas, In order to prevent youth from obtaining these beverages, Senator Jeffrey Klein and Assemblymember Felix Ortiz introduced S4221-A and A.6914, respectively, which would amend the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law by classifying flavored malt beverages as liquor for distribution, wholesale and retail sale purposes; and

Whereas, S4221-A/A.6914 seek to amend the definition of liquor to include flavored malt beverages for the purposes of distribution, wholesale and retail sale; and

Whereas, S4221-A/A.6914 would define a flavored malt beverage as an alcoholic beverage containing more than six percent alcohol and more than one percent sugar in the form of flavors such as fruit juice, among other ingredients; and

Whereas, Restricting the sale of all alcopops to liquor stores would dramatically decrease youth availability to these products; and

Whereas, This legislation represents a significant step in curtailing underage drinking of these dangerous substances; and

Whereas, This legislation would further protect children if the definition of flavored malt beverages was

expanded to include products with lower alcohol contents, as several of the alcopops popular with youth have less than six percent alcohol content; and

Whereas, Currently, there are 8,700 retail outlets in New York City where underage minors can potentially purchase and obtain these products; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation which would limit the sale of alcopops to liquor stores.

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