

TO: Chairman Joseph Solomon, Jr. and Members of the House Committee on Corporations

FROM: American Beverage Association

DATE: January 20, 2026

**SUBJECT: Opposition of H.B. 7065: An Act Relating to Health and Safety**

### **Background**

The American Beverage Association (ABA) is the trade association representing the non-alcoholic beverage industry. The ABA represents hundreds of beverage producers, distributors, franchise companies and supporting businesses that employ more than 275,000 people across the country. The beverage industry in Rhode Island employs over 500 people and provides over \$145 million in wages and benefits.

ABA members offer consumers myriad brands, flavors and packaging choices and a broad assortment of drink options including soft drinks in a wide range of calories, ready-to-drink teas, bottled waters, water beverages, juice drinks and 100 percent juice, sports drinks and energy drinks.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on H.B. 7065 which would require a 50% reduction in the amount of sugars in all liquid beverages sold in Rhode Island.

### **Today, Nearly 60% of Beverages Sold Have Zero Sugar**

America's beverage companies recognize the health challenges facing Americans and Rhode Islanders, and we are proud to be part of the solution, supporting families' efforts to achieve a balanced lifestyle. Our industry has worked hard to help reduce sugar in consumers' diets and tackle obesity. We are leveraging our industry's strengths in product innovation and marketing to offer consumers more choices with less sugar, smaller portion sizes and clear calorie information. That includes being the only food industry sector with successful zero calorie alternatives to flagship products.

While adult obesity is up 37.4% since 2000, full-calorie soda sales are down 23.5% and beverage calories per serving are down 44.2%<sup>12</sup>. If the two were connected, obesity rates should have decreased with the decline of soda consumption. When consumption of all sugar-sweetened beverages is combined, they account for less than 6% of calories in the American diet, according to USDA analysis of government data.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention NCHS Data Brief: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db360.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Beverage Marketing Corporation

<sup>3</sup> 2020 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee: [https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/DA\\_Supplement\\_FoodCategorySources\\_0.pdf](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/DA_Supplement_FoodCategorySources_0.pdf)

## **Conclusion**

While we recognize the good intention of H.B.7065 as it relates to desired health outcomes, and we express strong opposition due to the complexities with implementing such a standard. The bill also fails to recognize the work our industry has already taken to reducing the amount of sugar and calories consumed from beverages. We look forward to working with members of the committee to address health challenges and to learn more about the industry's commitments in this space.