

Maryland Advisory Council on Health and Wellness

Legislative Bill Review Meeting

Minutes

JANUARY 23, 2024; 9:00-9:30 A.M.

Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT

Salliann Alborn
Andrew Baker
Crystal Bell
Tara Clemons
Jonathan Dayton
Leigh Ann Eagle
Jennifer Eastman
Mychelle Farmer
Roger Harrell
Darryl Heggans
Seth Martin
Lusi Martin-Braswell
Mallory Mourdajian
Jared Meacham
Vaple Robinson
Marsha Seidelman
Jason Semanoff
Pamela Williams
Pamela Xenakis

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Mary Backley
Felicia Brannon
Gary Gerstenblith
Aruna Nathan
Afton Thomas
Teresa Titus-Howard
Sam Zisow-McClean

MDH STAFF PRESENT

Kristi Pier
Dana Moncrief
Alexandra Nowalk

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT

NONE

Meeting opened at 9:01am by Kristi Pier. Chair Titus-Howard was not able to attend the meeting. Ms. Pier reviewed the agenda and asked Ms. Moncrief to provide an overview of SB220.

1. Discussion of SB 220 - Public Health - Public Health Services and Protections - Revisions: Dana Moncrief, Director for the MDH Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control, provided an overview of SB220. Ms. Moncrief discussed the overarching “departmental” bill which serves to update/revise multiple MDH statutes. The focus of the Council’s position for SB220 is to align the military exemption language with the federal law. In 2019, both Maryland and the US federal government enacted laws that raised the minimum legal sales age for all tobacco products from 18 to 21 years old. The Maryland law that went into effect on October 1, 2019 included a military exemption which permits tobacco retailers to sell tobacco products to active-military service members ages 18 to 20 with a valid military identification. Under the federal law, however, it is illegal for a retailer to sell any tobacco product to an individual under

age 21, with no exceptions. Because there are no exemptions in the federal law any states with a military exemption, including Maryland, are violating the federal law. In addition, the differences between the federal and state laws complicate efforts for tobacco retailers to comply with, and government agencies enforce, tobacco sales laws in Maryland. SB 220 will reduce confusion for retailers, making it easier for them to comply with the law.

Jennifer Eastman asked about one other aspect of the bill under the Family Law Act, specifically with MDH as the “payor of last resort.” The members discussed whether the Council would need to address other aspects of the bill. It was decided the Council’s position statement should include an acknowledgement of the aspects of the bill, however, the position is focused on the revision to the military exemption language.

2. Public Comment—no members of the public were in attendance.
 3. SB220 Position Vote—A vote was taken on the position, with the addition of the above acknowledgement language. A quorum was present; the position was passed for submission.
 4. Closing 9:28 AM
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