

Committee on Children JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: HB-5269 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A WORKING GROUP TO STUDY ENERGY DRINK CONSUMPTION BY CHILDREN AND REQUIRING CERTAIN SIGNAGE AT THE

Title: POINT OF SALE OF SUCH DRINKS.

Vote Date: 3/3/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/24/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

The Committee on Children

CO-SPONSORS OF THE BILL:

Sen. Anwar, 3rd District

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill seeks to establish a working group to examine energy drink consumption by children and the potential signage placement in establishments that distribute these beverages. Through this legislation, the working group would have the ability to investigate the data currently emerging regarding energy drink consumption by children and its potential health impacts. Additionally, it would gather information on the regulatory environment surrounding the advertising of these drinks. The research by the working group would serve to inform any future legislation regarding the regulation of these drinks for child safety and public health purposes.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE (IF APPLICABLE):

There is no substitute language.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

[The Department of Consumer Protection, Commissioner Bryan T. Cafferelli:](#) Mr. Cafferelli supports the intent of H.B. 5269 but requests technical revisions, including extending the working group's reporting deadline and clarifying timelines and specifications

for required point-of-sale signage. The agency seeks additional time to properly study health risks, compliance issues, and develop recommendations for public awareness.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Sen. Christine Cohen, 12th District: Sen. Cohen expresses significant concern regarding the lack of regulation of caffeinated beverages. She states that this bill is a step forward in creating awareness surrounding the negative health impacts of these drinks, especially for young people. She notes that while these types of regulations may be onerous to business owners, this bill can begin discussion and research into this topic.

UConn Rudd Center for Food Policy and Health, Dr. Fran Fleming-Milici: Dr. Fleming-Milici supports H.B. 5269, citing extensive research linking energy drink consumption in youth to serious physical, psychological, and behavioral harms, including increased emergency room visits and poison center calls. She argues that energy drinks are aggressively marketed and easily accessible to children, and that point-of-sale signage and further study are necessary steps toward stronger protections.

Mike Papale: Mr. Papale, a sudden cardiac arrest survivor and heart disease patient, supports H.B. 5269, arguing that energy drinks pose serious risks to youth, particularly those with diagnosed or undiagnosed heart conditions. He contends that point-of-sale signage and further study are commonsense steps to increase awareness, promote informed decision-making, and help prevent avoidable tragedies.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Red Bull North America, Senior Director of Government Affairs Megan Boyle: Ms. Boyle opposes the display of additional signage as the company has a longstanding commitment to collaborating with legislative and regulatory authorities to ensure the legality of its beverage marketing. The proposal establishes a new precedent that could reduce the number of non-alcoholic, carbonated beverages currently sitting on shelves. The bill presupposes risk, discriminates, and regulates energy drinks differently from other caffeine-containing beverages.

New England Convenience Store & Energy Marketers Association, Executive Director Peter Brennan: Mr. Brennan opposes HB 5269 for imposing unnecessary and unfunded mandates on convenience stores and other retailers without evidence. Mandating point-of-sale signage for energy drinks places the responsibility for delivering public health messaging on retailers. He notes that retail-based mandates are unlikely to influence purchasing decisions and that small, family-owned stores wish not to become hubs for regulation.

American Beverage Association, Vice President of State Government Affairs, Sandra Grance: Ms. Grance testifies in opposition of bill as it would set a new wave of precedent for energy drinks. Energy drinks have been sold to billions for decades. Science doesn't support the initiative, considering coffee contains nearly twice as much caffeine.

Connecticut Retail Network, President, Tim Phelan: Mr. Phelan opposes the bill and raises three areas of concern. The first is how the bill presupposes risk without scientific justification and mandates retail signage before the convening of a working group. The

second is that the working group's focus is discriminatory towards energy drinks and ignorant of caffeine consumption as a whole. The third is against the rushed signage requirement and the lack of consideration shown towards small businesses.

Reported by: Mia Giglietti and Zachary Robinson Date: 3/9/2026