

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORT

2020 Legislative Session

Reference No.: CB-071-2020

Draft No.: 2

Committee: Committee of the Whole

Date: 10/15/2020

Action: FAV (A)

REPORT: Favorable as amended 11-0: Council Members Turner, Anderson-Walker, Davis, Dernoga, Franklin, Glaros, Harrison, Hawkins, Ivey, Streeter and Taveras

The Prince George's County Council convened as the Committee of the Whole on Wednesday, October 15, 2020 to consider CB-071-2020, An Act Concerning Healthy Children's Meals and Beverages. This legislation would support parent's efforts to feed their children healthfully by ensuring healthy meals are readily available to children in restaurants and that offering healthier children's meals will improve the overall health and well-being of children and families living in Prince George's County. This legislation creates definitions relative to healthy children's meals and beverages and establishes nutrition requirements with enforcement and penalties. This would be one of the first bills of its kind in the nation to impose specific and detailed dietary guidelines.

Sydney Daigle, Director of the Food Equity Council, stated that the food environment influences health outcomes. Healthy food access is imperative.

Shawn McIntosh of Sugar Free Kids explained that the bill will put the county on the right path to healthier lifestyles.

Stuart Berlow of the American Heart Association noted that communities of color are targeted with unhealthy food options and expressed strong support for the bill.

Philip Cronin, speaking on behalf of the McDonalds Corporation, Maryland Government Relations Office, noted that the company has been working to create healthier options for some time and that a number of those options are now on the menu. Specific requirements would curtail their ability to sell the companies children's meals. Proposed amendments were submitted based upon the original draft of the legislation.

Melvin Thompson representing the Restaurant Association of Maryland noted that members of the association are concerned about the timing of the proposal and the outcome of imposing more restrictions on businesses still struggling due to COVID-19. Amendments were submitted to the Council for consideration.

Ellen Valentino, representing the Maryland Beverage Association stated that the goals of the legislation are aligned with the goals of her organization and noted past support on other similar legislation. Amendments were suggested.

Council Member Harrison described the intent of the bill and explained the importance to the health of the community and noted that enforcement will be key.

Leroy Maddox, Legislative Officer, County Council described Draft 2 changes which included adding nutrition requirements in Section 12 which further clarify the intent of the section and the requirements of the different phases of the legislation.

Terry Bell, the County Executive's Council Liaison, stated the administration is in support.

The Policy Analyst group advised CB-071-2020 may have a negative impact based on the expenditures related to inspection and enforcement efforts; however, there could be a positive impact on revenues as a result of fines assessed for violations. In addition, the health benefits associated with the change could improve the overall health of children and over time, the general population.

The Office of Law finds CB-071-2020 to be in proper legislative form with no legal impediments to its enactment.

After discussion the County Council, sitting as the Committee of the Whole voted out CB-071-2020 favorable as amended, 11-0.