

RESOLUTION
OF THE
TENNESSEE PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
REGARDING
ENERGY DRINKS

WHEREAS, The aggressive marketing of energy drinks as a quick pick-me up and an instant source of vigor has made the energy drink business a \$3.5 billion a year industry; and,

WHEREAS, The target consumers for energy drinks are adolescents and young adults and reportedly as many as half of individuals in this age group who consume energy drinks do so on at least a weekly basis; and,

WHEREAS, While the stimulant caffeine is the primary ingredient in energy drinks and caffeine content may be listed on the label, many energy drinks also include other caffeine- containing stimulant substances like guarana, kola nut, tea, yerba mate, cocoa and others which do not require caffeine labeling; and,

WHEREAS, Cola and coffee also contain caffeine but the amount of caffeine in an energy drink ranges from two to five times what is found in cola; and,

WHEREAS, Energy drinks offer minimal nutritional value and frequently contain high amounts of sugar and other chemicals or supplements like taurine, ginseng, carnitine, ginkgo, inositol, milk thistle or grape seed extract most of which there is little known regarding the effect of long-term or repeated consumption; and,

WHEREAS, Frequent ingestion of energy drinks can adversely affect health and be associated with side effects like irritability, heart palpitations, insomnia, and more serious cardiac, renal, musculoskeletal and central nervous system problems; and,

WHEREAS, There has been a doubling of the number of Emergency Room visits linked to Energy Drinks with a recent SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service) finding energy drink-related ER visits rising from 10,068 in 2007 to 20,783 in 2011, and,

WHEREAS, A new trend to mix alcohol with energy drinks often leads to a very serious problem of combining alcohol which is a depressant with caffeine which is a stimulant and when taken in combination may significantly alter someone's awareness of their degree of intoxication and therefore adversely affect their judgment; and,

WHEREAS, Confusion exists between the use of sports drinks like Gatorade and PowerAde and energy drinks which are not recommended for consumption before, during or after exercise and the use of highly caffeinated beverages in combination with exercise greatly increases the likelihood of health related side effects.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Tennessee Public Health Association strongly recommends we work with consumer protection organizations to protect underage consumers by providing better product labeling to reflect the true concentration of stimulate ingredients in all energy drinks as well as warn of the extreme risks of combining energy drinks and alcohol

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that warning labels be encouraged cautioning that the consumption of energy drinks during exercise or as an aid to rehydration after exercise is not recommended

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be furnished to members of the Tennessee General Assembly and that a copy of this resolution be spread upon the minutes of the Association.

Karen Lynn
President

Doris G. Spain
Executive Director

Chris Taylor
Chair, Resolution Committee