



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-03056**

BY: **MR. IACONO (ALFRED-PELLAN)**

DATE: **DECEMBER 7, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **MR. JOHN OLIVER**

Response by the Minister of Health

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Alcoholic beverages

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government of Canada is deeply concerned with the availability of sweetened, high-alcohol beverages that are sold in large-volume, single-serve containers. These beverages can contain as many as four standard drinks per container without the taste of alcohol, as the alcohol base is purified and then flavoured. These products have been designed to appeal to youth and can lead to the consumption of alcohol.

This is why Health Canada is introducing amendments to the *Food and Drug Regulations*. To minimize the risk to Canadians, Health Canada has proposed draft regulations to limit the amount of alcohol in this type of beverage to amounts that are more in line with [Canada's Low Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines](#).

The proposed regulatory changes would restrict the alcohol content in these beverages to 1.5 standard drinks (25.6 ml of alcohol) when they are packaged in containers of 1000 mL or less. This includes both non-resealable and re-sealable containers. Glass containers with a volume of 750 mL or higher will be exempt from the regulations as this format is typically for multi-serving products.

The proposed regulations reflect comments received in response to the [Notice of Intent](#) (March 19, 2018), a [report from the Standing Committee on Health](#) (June 19, 2018) and feedback from stakeholders. The regulations would help protect

Canadians—particularly youth—from unintentional overconsumption or excessive drinking, which could lead to alcohol-related harms, including acute alcohol poisoning and death.

All Canadians are encouraged to review the proposed changes and to share their feedback by February 5, 2019.

The Government of Canada is also committed to addressing alcohol-related harms more broadly through a comprehensive, collaborative, compassionate and evidence-based public health approach. In December 2016, the Minister of Health introduced the Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy to address illegal and legal substances, including alcohol. In September 2018, Health Canada launched public consultations on the Strategy. The consultations ended on December 4, 2018, and Health Canada is now reviewing the input received. This information will be used to ensure that future actions are aligned with the latest evidence and best practices.

The recommendations from the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health report on highly sweetened pre-mixed drinks will also be considered as Health Canada develops an approach to alcohol under the drug strategy in the months to come.