

December 19, 2022

Sent by email



The Honourable Patrick Brazeau, Senator
Senate of Canada
Parliament Hill Ottawa, ON K1A 0A4

Dear Senator Brazeau:

RE: Support for 'Bill S-254 An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (warning label on alcoholic beverages)'

**The Regional
Municipality of
Durham**

Health Department

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As Durham Region's Medical Officer of Health, I am writing to express support for the [Senate Bill S-254 An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act \(warning label on alcoholic beverages\)](#) calling on the federal government of Canada to implement alcohol warning labels. **Bill S-254** and the implementation of federally mandated labels on all alcohol containers sold in Canada represents an important step to better inform your constituents about the health risks of alcohol. This is especially important given that the **majority of Canadians are unaware that alcohol is classified by the WHO as a Class 1 carcinogen and causes seven different types of cancer including breast and colon.**

Bill S-254 aligns with the recent call for warning labels that formed part of the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction's proposed new [Canadian Guidance on Alcohol and Health](#) and the recommendation that Health Canada: "**[require, through regulation, the mandatory labelling of all alcoholic beverages to list the number of standard drinks in a container, the Guidance on Alcohol and Health, health warnings and nutrition information.](#)**" This recommendation comes from leading scientific experts in the field and is supported by [Evidence-based Recommendations for Labelling Alcohol Products in Canada](#) developed by the [Canadian Alcohol Policy Evaluation \(CAPE\)](#) project researchers, who have been leaders in the alcohol policy field for over 10 years. Importantly, Australia and New Zealand recently [mandated a pregnancy warning,](#)

the Irish government has passed regulations requiring a [cancer warning label](#) and a recent study in Yukon demonstrated the [impact of warning labels](#).

I also support calls for the federal government to develop a federal Alcohol Act, within which alcohol labelling regulations can be housed. [Tobacco](#) and [cannabis](#) products, two other legally regulated psychoactive substances, are already subject to mandatory warning labels and governed by federal Acts. It is time to call on the Government of Canada, without interference from the alcohol industry, to do the same with alcohol, a drug that cost Canada [\\$16.6 billion](#) and was responsible for more than 18,000 deaths in 2017 alone.

In summary, I support [Bill S-254 An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act \(warning label on alcoholic beverages\)](#). I appreciate your support on these important issues for the health of Canadians.

Yours sincerely,



Robert Kyle, BSc, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC, FACPM
Durham Region Medical Officer of Health

cc The Honourable Jean Yves Duclos, PC, MP
Dr. Colin Carrie, MP Oshawa
The Honourable Mark Holland, PC, MP Ajax
Mr. Philip Lawrence, MP Northumberland/Peterborough South
Ms. Jennifer O'Connell, MP Pickering/Uxbridge
The Honourable Erin O'Toole, MP Durham
Mr. Jamie Schmale, MP Haliburton/Kawartha Lakes/Brock
Mr. Ryan Turnbull, MP Whitby