



**Agency of Commerce and Community Development**  
**Department of Tourism & Marketing**  
National Life Building – North, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
One National Life Drive  
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501  
[www.vermontvacation.com](http://www.vermontvacation.com)

[phone] 802-798-2191  
[fax] 802-828-3383  
[e-mail] [Wendy.Knight@vermont.gov](mailto:Wendy.Knight@vermont.gov)

S.70 Nutritional Standards for Children's Menus in Restaurants  
House Committee on Human Services  
Wendy Knight, Commissioner, Tourism & Marketing  
April 12, 2018

Each year, 13 million people visit Vermont. These visitors generate \$2.6 billion in spending, which represents 8% of the State's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Vermont is legendary for its exceptional locally grown and produced food and craft beverages, and restaurants that feature local foods. Restaurants are a significant component of Vermont's tourism and hospitality industry. Next to lodging, restaurant spending is the second highest category of visitor spending. Visitors to Vermont spend \$450 million on food and beverage in restaurants. This visitor spending benefits Vermont restauranteurs, employees, chefs, farmers, and local manufacturers of craft beverages and value-added products.

The Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing does not support mandates that contribute to an increase in the operational cost for restaurants, impose additional burdens on businesses, infringe on business and creative decisions of chefs and restaurant owners, and limit dining options for visitors and residents.

As written, S.70 requires restaurants to offer as a default beverage in children's meals water, sparkling water, milk, non-dairy milk alternative or 100% fruit juice without added natural or artificial sweeteners. While this default beverage "compromise" bill appears benign, it still requires restaurants to change and print new menus and potentially adjust their product inventory which is costly and burdensome.

There are many causes of childhood obesity beyond consuming sugary beverages at restaurants. We support a voluntary approach that involves educating parents about healthy behaviors, including beverage options and consumption, for children. The Administration looks forward to addressing childhood obesity with proven solutions, such as expanding the work of RiseVT, that do not burden Vermont's businesses with unnecessary and costly mandates.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wendy Knight". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Wendy Knight  
Commissioner, Tourism and Marketing  
[Wendy.Knight@Vermont.gov](mailto:Wendy.Knight@Vermont.gov); 802-798-2191