

PENNSYLVANIA SOFT DRINK ASSOCIATION

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September 17, 1998

The Honorable Frank A. Serafini
PA House of Representatives
919 South Main Street
Old Forge, PA 18518

Dear Representative Serafini:

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Soft Drink Association, I am writing to you to express the Association's opposition to House Bill 1170, prohibiting the sale or serving of any beverage containing caffeine to prisoners.

Caffeine is a safe food ingredient found naturally in tea, coffee, cocoa and other foods and has been part of the human diet for centuries.

Caffeine is one of the most thoroughly studied ingredients in the food supply and is approved by the United States Food & Drug Administration (FDA). Caffeine is generally regarded as a mild stimulant, but the degree of effect is variable and highly dependent on individual sensitivity and the amount consumed. Comprehensive evaluations of all the available research on caffeine have led the National Academy of Sciences, the United States Surgeon General and FDA to conclude that normal caffeine consumption is not associated with any health risks.

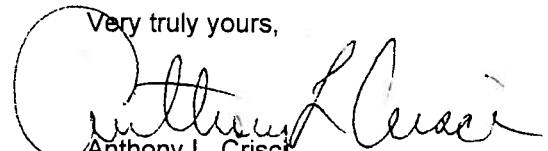
Currently, the United States Food & Drug Administration (FDA) regulates caffeine, allowing 6 milligrams per fluid ounce. Most soft drinks are well below that limit, at approximately 3 milligrams per ounce or 18 milligrams per 6-ounce serving. Caffeine is added in small amounts to colas and some other soft drinks due to its unique flavor. Flavor experts recognize caffeine as a valuable ingredient because it adds a unique bitter taste that blends well with, and complements other flavors and sweeteners.

Most major health authorities agree that caffeine is not addictive. Unlike addictive substances, caffeine is not associated with any chronic health problems. The consumption of caffeine does not result in steadily increased use, and it is not difficult to decrease or stop consumption of caffeine.

For the foregoing reasons, the PSDA respectfully opposes any and all bans on caffeine. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,


Anthony L. Crisci
Legislative Counsel

cc: Hon. Tom Gannon, Chair, House Judiciary Committee
Hon. Jerry Birmelin, Chair, Subcommittee on Crime & Corrections

