



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Senator Klein and Health Officials, Four Loko Agrees to Change Misleading Packaging and Labeling

JEFFREY D. KLEIN February 14, 2013

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NEW YORK, NY – After over a year of pressure by State Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester), the Independent Democratic Conference, and other health advocacy organizations, the makers of popular alcoholic malt beverage Four Loko, have agreed to make significant changes to their packaging. On Tuesday, the Federal Trade Commission said that the creators, Chicago based Phusion Projects, would be required to place an “alcohol facts panel” in the back of their malt-flavored beverages. The containers will also be re-packaged so they can be resealed, a measure that experts say will reduce the likelihood of customers guzzling down the beverage in one short sitting.

“I am pleased that the makers of Four Loko are finally taking serious steps that will reduce the danger of these products to our country’s children. These regulations have been a long-time coming and I will keep a close watch on Phusion to ensure that they stay true to their word” said Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester).

Senator Klein has long pushed Four Loko to make changes to these “Alcopops” beverages, also known as High Alcohol Flavored Malt Beverages. Four Loko’s 12% alcohol content

makes a single serving far more dangerous than that of an ordinary alcoholic beverage—in fact, a super sized can delivers the alcoholic equivalent of 4-5 beers. The product's high alcohol content, cheap price, and colorful and misleading labeling have been identified as key components to Four Loko's successful marketing campaign for young and underage customers.

In June of 2010, in an effort to identify the extent of medical problems inflicted by alcopop beverage on New York's youth, Senator Klein conducted a survey of colleges and hospitals across New York State. Senator Klein's investigation uncovered multiple cases of hospitalization related to alcopop consumption.

At the time, as Chairman of the New York State Standing Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, Senator Klein issued legislative subpoenas in June of 2011 regarding the manufacturing, distribution, and marketing of Four Loko. The subpoena garnered wide media attention and was part of the Committee's ongoing investigation into high alcohol Flavored Malt Beverages and their impact on minors.

On March 2012, Senator Klein passed legislation that included moving these beverages out of corner shops and restricting their sales to liquor stores only. These drinks are heavily marketed to under aged consumers, who, through an investigation conducted by the NYPD's Bronx Borough Command in 2011, have been able to easily purchase the drinks at local convenience stores.

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