



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACTS: Michael Scippa 415 847-3006
Rob Lipton 510 384-1041

**KUDOS TO U.S. SURGEON GENERAL VIVEK MURTHY FOR RELEASING
THE ALCOHOL AND CANCER RISK REPORT**

**TAKE ACTION TO TELL THE TTB & CONGRESS TO REQUIRE CANCER WARNING LABELS ON
ALL BEVERAGE ALCOHOL PRODUCTS**



SAN RAFAEL, California (January 3, 2024) – [Alcohol Justice](#) is commending United States Surgeon General Vivek Murthy for releasing the [Alcohol and Cancer Risk Report](#).

The report released January 3, 2025, documents alcohol's role in causing cancer which is becoming clearer each year. With this important publication, the Surgeon General has joined the chorus of researchers and advocates in flagging the risk and calling attention to alcohol's status as one of the leading behavioral risk factors for cancer. The report also urges Congress to reconsider the existing outdated cancer warning labels. The report shines stark light on how current federal policy has failed U.S. residents, falling well short of the state of medical knowledge and leaving most alcohol consumers to either educate themselves or die trying.

Alcohol use brings on a variety of cancers, attacking the liver, colon, breast, throat, and esophagus, among others. The report estimates that, over a decade, nearly 1 million cancer cases are caused by alcohol in the United States—and 1 out of 6 develop in drinkers who are consuming within the current federal recommendations. The risk hits women particularly hard, as nearly 60% of alcohol-related cancer deaths are due to breast cancer. The cancer danger starts rising with any alcohol consumption at all, confirming the international [Global Burden of Disease](#) collaborative's consensus findings: *there is no risk-free level of alcohol consumption.*

"The research showing positive health effects from alcohol consumption are mostly a function of bad science corrupted by industry," stated Rob Lipton, PhD, Development Director at Alcohol Justice. *"There is no dose response effect found for this supposed benefit while alcohol consumption related harms have been repeatedly shown."*

The clearly spelled out risk in the new report calls greater attention for the need for a revised alcohol warning label. The current label, imposed by the federal government has not been modified in 35 years, despite the fact that the act mandating it also called for it to be revised as new information became available.

In 2025, the long-delayed label update now can be readily informed by the current alcohol-cancer report so that the clear danger can be stated. The current, very outdated label, only acknowledges that alcohol “may cause health problems.” This is far from satisfactory given the generally accepted scientific understanding of increased cancer risk.

There are other important improvements needed for a revised label:

The current label suffers from poor legibility, a lack of graphical or colorful elements, and a single, monotonous message than encourages “warning fatigue.”

As the new Congress is sworn in, they should make it a priority to embrace the current best practices for protecting public health: promoting cancer risk information, properly informing consumers of the products’ risks, and understand that the industry’s messages will never be in the public’s interest.

California’s Prop 65

California already has a warning system in place, but it remains unsatisfactory. Although [Prop 65](#)-mandated signs at points-of-sale for alcoholic beverages warning that alcohol can cause cancer may be responsible for California residents having a greater awareness of the risk than the general U.S. population, this awareness remains low. The signs themselves are low-impact, often poorly maintained, and exempt from the on-package requirements of other CA-specific cancer warnings. Moreover, the increasing prevalence of online sales has given retailers opportunity to evade the requirement, and enforcement is arcane and often absent.

Important points to consider

- Alcohol is one of the leading behavioral risk factors for cancers, behind only tobacco use and obesity.
- That risk starts increasing with the first sip.
- Women bear outsized risk, as around 60% of alcohol-related cancer deaths in women are due to breast cancer.
- Only 45% of U.S. residents are aware of the alcohol-cancer link.
- Current U.S. warning labels have not kept up with best practices for product health advisories.
- Creating an impactful warning starts with congressional action—the incoming class has this opportunity to make their mark.

TAKE ACTION

Tell the U.S. Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) and your members of Congress it's time to raise the public's awareness about the serious risks of consuming alcoholic beverages by requiring cancer warning labels on all alcohol containers and packaging, and on all alcohol advertising and marketing materials. [Click here to TAKE ACTION.](#)

###