

Fact Sheet

Protect Child Health in California

AB 2030 COULD SAVE LIVES AND HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS FOR CALIFORNIA



The Problem



- **Youth are at risk.** A new study by Hall et al. found that nearly 1 in 10 adolescents have used ineffective and potentially harmful over-the-counter diet pills and similar products misused for weight loss in their lifetimes. Prevalence of use among adolescents was 2.0% in the past week, 4.4% in the past month, 6.2% in the past year, and 8.9% in their lifetime. ⁽¹⁾
- **Dangerous products.** Weight-loss and muscle-building dietary supplements carry serious risks, including organ failure, heart attack, stroke, testicular cancer, and even death. ⁽²⁻⁵⁾ Too often they contain illegal steroids, pharmaceutical drugs, or heavy metals. ⁽⁶⁾ The American Academy of Pediatrics strongly cautions against teens using over-the-counter diet pills ⁽⁷⁾ or muscle-building supplements ⁽⁸⁾ for any reason.
- **Weak federal regulation.** Supplements are taken off shelves by the Food and Drug Administration only after reports of serious injury. ⁽⁹⁾ In 2015, attorneys general of 14 states joined in a [letter](#) to Congress seeking a federal investigation into dietary supplements, ⁽¹⁰⁾ but still no federal action has been taken. California's youth need greater protection now.



Urgent Action Needed by California Lawmakers



- **Protect young people from the dangers of over-the-counter diet pills and muscle-building supplements.** If signed into law, **AB 2030** would ban the sale of over-the-counter diet pills and muscle-building supplements to minors under 18 years old, as already done for other dangerous products such as tobacco and pseudoephedrine. New York State has already passed a similar law, which took effect in April 2024.



Two Studies by Brandeis Economists Estimate Very Low, One-time Implementation Cost but Millions in Savings From Protective Effects



Expert economists say implementation cost of this legislation likely to be minimal! ¹¹

- **Health economists from The Heller School for Social Policy and Management from Brandeis University** carried out a study to estimate the cost of implementing a state-level ban on sales of OTC diet pills and muscle-building supplements to minors by gathering data through key informant interviews and public data on state websites.

What they found...

The one-time implementation opportunity cost was estimated to be **only \$5,640 of the FY25 state budget - so virtually nothing!**

These same expert economists also say this legislation could save the state hundreds of millions! ¹¹

- Modeled cost-effectiveness of the age-restriction policy vs. current law using two closed cohorts of males & females aged 0-17 years in California.

What they found...

- Their cost-effectiveness study estimated:
 - This legislation would prevent over 180,000 eating disorder cases and more than 270,000 other adverse medical events over 30 years.
 - Also it would yield annual healthcare savings of **\$134 million** and annual societal savings of **\$236 million**.

Given the bill's strong potential to provide urgently needed protection for youth and the estimated low cost of implementation, we urge your support for AB 2030.

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Protect the Health of California's Children

References

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11. [Tschampl CA, Tabata-Kelly M, Torrent L, Austin SB. Cost of implementation and cost-benefit analysis of policy to prohibit sale of over-the-counter diet pills and muscle-building supplements to minors in California and New Jersey. \(Manuscript in preparation\).](#)

Given the bill's strong potential to provide urgently needed protection for youth and the demonstrated low cost of implementation, we urge your support for AB 2030.