Mexico’s Lower House Passes Front-of-Pack Labeling Bill

On October 11, Mexico’s lower legislative house passed a bill that would require manufacturers to place front-of-pack (FOP) warning labels on food high in sugar, sodium, or saturated fat. The bill was published in the Diario Oficial de la Federación (Mexico’s equivalent of the Federal Register) and consists of a draft amendment to the General Labelling Specifications for Prepackaged Foods and Non-Alcoholic Beverages-Commercial and Health Information.

Mexico’s current FOP labeling provides information on the quantities of and percent daily values for saturated fat, total fat, total sugars, sodium, and calories in foods. The proposed amendments would require manufacturers to place an octagonal warning symbol, stating “Excess Calories,” “Excess Saturated Fat,” “Excess Sugars,” and “Contains Caffeine – Avoid in Children.”

While FOP labeling is increasingly common in Central and South American countries, a unique provision of the Mexico bill is that it would also include a warning for foods containing artificial sweeteners, stating “Contains Sweeteners – Avoid in Children.”

Those interested in commenting on the draft amendment have 60 calendar-days to submit comments. The bill will now go to the Senate, where it is expected to pass, and then to President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, who has expressed support for the bill.

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