



For Immediate Release

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Molson Coors Appeals National Advertising Division Recommendation to Discontinue “Light Beer Shouldn’t Taste Like Water” Claim

New York, NY – Feb. 23, 2023 – In a Fast-Track SWIFT challenge brought by Anheuser-Busch Companies LLC, the National Advertising Division (NAD) of BBB National Programs recommended that Molson Coors Beverage Company discontinue the claim that “light beer shouldn’t taste like water. It should taste like beer.”

Fast-Track SWIFT is an expedited challenge process designed for single-issue advertising cases brought to NAD. Anheuser-Busch challenged Molson Coors’s claim that “light beer shouldn’t taste like water. It should taste like beer” in advertising promoting Miller Lite.

In this challenge, NAD determined that, in context, “light beer shouldn’t taste like water. It should taste like beer” is not puffery or a mere opinion. Although no specific competing light beer is identified by name in the challenged videos, NAD determined that tasting “like water” is a measurable attribute. Reliable sensory testing could demonstrate whether consumers detect a watery taste or the complete absence of taste. Consumers may also reasonably expect that the statement is supported by such evidence.

Because Molson Coors did not submit evidence supporting the claim that any other light beers “taste like water,” NAD recommended that the claim be discontinued.

NAD noted that nothing in its decision precludes Molson Coors from making other truthful and not misleading claims relating to consumers’ taste preferences or other claims pertaining to the taste qualities of its beers or competing beers.

NAD determined that the Anheuser-Busch challenge was appropriate for Fast-Track SWIFT because it presented the single issue as to whether the challenged claim was misleading.

In its advertiser statement, Molson Coors stated that it “disagrees with the decision and recommendation of the National Advertising Division and will appeal the decision to the National Advertising Review Board” based on its belief that “the ads do not expressly identify Michelob Ultra or any other light beers” and it should not be precluded from publicly sharing its “opinion” that light beer should not taste like water.

Appeals of NAD decisions are made to BBB National Programs’ National Advertising Review Board (NARB), the appellate-level truth-in-advertising body of BBB National Programs.

All BBB National Programs case decision summaries can be found in the [case decision library](#). For the full text of NAD, NARB, and CARU decisions, subscribe to the [online archive](#).

About BBB National Programs: BBB National Programs, a non-profit organization, is the home of U.S. independent industry self-regulation, currently operating more than a dozen globally recognized programs that have been helping enhance consumer trust in business for more than 50 years. These programs provide third-party accountability and dispute resolution services that address existing and emerging industry issues, create a fairer playing field for businesses, and a better experience for consumers. BBB National Programs continues to evolve its work and grow its impact by providing business guidance and fostering best practices in arenas such as advertising, child-and-teen-directed marketing, data privacy, dispute resolution, automobile warranty, technology, and emerging areas. To learn more, visit bbbprograms.org.

About the National Advertising Division: The National Advertising Division (NAD) of BBB National Programs provides independent self-regulation and dispute resolution services, guiding the truthfulness of advertising across the U.S. NAD reviews national advertising in all media and its decisions set consistent standards for advertising truth and accuracy, delivering meaningful protection to consumers and leveling the playing field for business.