

A Clear Message on Soda Taxes

Taxing Sugar-Sweetened Beverages is Wrong Public Policy for a Government Too Involved in Our Lives

- **Government is getting too big and too involved in our personal lives.** People don't want government telling them what to eat or drink by taxing common grocery items. People can decide what to buy without government help.
- **Government needs to trim its budget fat and leave our grocery budgets alone.** If we let government tax beverages, who knows where it will end? The next time government wants to fund more programs, it will just slap taxes on more of our groceries. Government needs to stay out of our grocery carts.
- **Hard-working families are holding their own in this tough economy, but they can't afford higher grocery prices.** There could not be a worse time to ask middle-income families to pay any more in taxes. These taxes will just further squeeze families already struggling to make ends meet.
- **These new taxes are a money grab.** They will just lead to more government spending and higher taxes for the American people. People are concerned that a government with too much control in our lives becomes a government out of control.
- **Higher taxes will threaten jobs and stymie job growth in an industry that provides hundreds of thousands of good-paying jobs in communities across America.** That's the last thing we need in this economy. We need policies that promote job creation.

And for a Complex Problem like Childhood Obesity that a New Tax Can't Even Begin to Fix

- **Taxes do not make people healthier.** Making smart, educated decisions about diet and exercise do. No tax ever made anyone healthy.
- **A new tax will not teach children healthy lifestyles or change their behavior.** There is a smarter way to keep our kids healthy, like educating them about diet and exercise. That will work.
- **Higher taxes are not the answer and government should not use them to try and do parents' jobs.** Moms and dads know how to take care of their kids and they deserve our appreciation for the good job they do. Childhood obesity is a serious problem. But taxing parents and families is not going to help. It's only going to add to their struggles in this economy.
- **Taxpayers don't trust that these new taxes will go to childhood obesity programs.** The taxes will just go to pay for a government that is already too big and too involved in our lives.
- **The beverage industry is taking bold action to do its part to help address childhood obesity by:**
 - Placing new labels clearly listing calories on the front of its beverages.
 - Cutting calories available from beverages in schools by 90 percent. Our companies removed full-calorie soft drinks from schools across America, replacing them with lower-calorie beverage choices.
 - Offering an ever-increasing selection of low- and no-calorie beverage choices, as well as mid-calorie beverages. This innovation has helped drive a 23 percent reduction in the average calories per serving from beverages sold between 1998 and 2010, according to Beverage Marketing Corporation research.