



## SB 1210 (Florez) – Taxing Soda to Fund Childhood Obesity Prevention

### Summary

This bill would levy a tax on soda and other sugar sweetened beverages of a penny for every teaspoon of added sugar. The \$1.5 billion raised by this tax on sugar sweetened beverages would be used to fund childhood obesity prevention.

### Background

Childhood obesity has become an epidemic in the United States and is the primary cause of type 2 diabetes and other long-term health problems. Since 1980, the number of obese children in the United States has more than tripled, and obesity now rivals smoking as the largest cause of preventable death and disease.

California has one of the fastest growing rates of obesity of any state in the nation. Nearly 16 million Californians are obese or overweight.

If the current obesity trends are not reversed, it is predicted that one in three children—and nearly half of Latino and African American children—born in the year 2000 will develop type 2 diabetes in their lifetime.

If we are serious about solving the obesity epidemic, we have to start with the biggest culprits. There is overwhelming evidence of the link between obesity and consumption of sugar sweetened beverages. In the last 30 years, the average American's daily caloric intake has increased by nearly 300 calories and 43% of those additional calories come from additional soda consumption.

Where soda was once a special treat, it has now become a part of our daily diets. There are 10 teaspoons of sugar in every 12 oz can of soda and a child's risk of obesity increases an average of 60% with each additional daily serving of soda. Yet, a study released last year by CCPHA and the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research found that 41% of children ages 2-11 and 62% of adolescents ages 12-17 consume at least one soda or other sugar-sweetened beverage ever day.

### This Bill

SB 1210 (Florez) helps to ensure that Big Soda begins to pay its fair share for its role in the obesity epidemic. By placing an excise tax of just a penny a teaspoon of added sugar on sweetened beverage, such as soft drinks, energy drinks, sweet teas and sports drinks, we can raise \$1.5 billion to prevent childhood obesity in California.

We will be able to use the money collected by this tax to do the things we know we should be doing to ensure that our children can be healthy. We will be able to fund good PE programs, healthy school meals and ensure our children are living healthy and active lives.

Finally, as we learned from the tobacco tax, an added benefit of an excise tax on soda is that it will drive down consumption and increase the health of Californians.

### Sponsor

California Center for Public Health Advocacy