



May 4, 2010

The Honorable Lois Wolk, Chair  
Senate Revenue & Taxation Committee  
State Capitol, Room 408  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Support for SB 1210 (Florez)**

Dear Senator Wolk:

**The California Center for Public Health Advocacy is pleased to sponsor SB 1210, a measure that would fund childhood obesity prevention programs through a small tax on the added sugar in sodas and other sweetened beverages.** At a rate of a penny per teaspoon of added sugar, SB 1210 will raise \$1.5 billion a year to help local schools and communities implement effective strategies to keep our children active and healthy.

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. 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.

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 children's daily diets. Last year a study released by the California Center for Public Health Advocacy 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 every day, even though a child's risk of obesity increases an average of 60% with each additional daily serving of soda.

Our children and our state deserve better. It is time for the makers of sugar sweetened beverages to pay their fair share for their role in California's obesity epidemic. SB 1210 will fund crucial childhood obesity prevention efforts throughout the state and help ensure that our children have a brighter tomorrow.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Richard  
Policy Director