Warning labels on sugary drinks on the way in California, apparently

By ACSH Staff — June 2, 2014

The California Senate just passed [1] a bill requiring soft drinks to be labeled with a warning linking the drinks to obesity, diabetes and tooth decay. The exact wording is Drinking beverages with added sugar contributes to obesity, diabetes and tooth decay, and the label would be required on drinks with added sweeteners that are more than 75 calories per 12 ounce serving.

The bill will now go to the state Assembly, and if passed will be in the hands of the Governor. The justification for this bill, according to Democratic state senator Bill Monning, its author, is that medical experts are claiming that high-calorie beverages are largely to blame for the obesity epidemic.

Senator Monning states, Some people accuse this (bill) of nanny governing and yet it is the government that's responsible to protect the public health and safety of its people. This is the equivalent of former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's failed attempt to ban sales of oversized sugary soft drinks. This is also the second time Senator Monning is backing a bill to control the drink choices of consumers. He supported a measure last year attempting to tax soft drinks.

ACSH's Ariel Savransky says, Putting these warning labels on soft drinks is going to do nothing to curb the obesity epidemic or deter people from consuming soft drinks. Besides adding more labels to those already required in California basically all products are required to have some sort of warning labels such as those required under Proposition 65 this bill unfairly demonizes soft drinks as being the sole cause for obesity. The fact is that a calorie is a calorie no matter what form it takes. If people are taking in more calories than they are expending, there will be an imbalance.