

# Taxes on sugary beverages being considered in California

By ACSH Staff — October 8, 2014



This past June, former Mayor Michael Bloomberg's ban on super-

sized sodas [was put to rest](#) [1], but if you thought that was the end of the attack on soda, you were mistaken. Currently, [two taxes on sugary beverages](#) [2] are being considered in the state of California, one in Berkeley and the other in San Francisco. These will be voted on in November.

The tax being considered in San Francisco is a 2-cent per ounce tax on sugary beverages, with the money from the tax ostensibly to be allocated to nutrition and health programs in schools, parks and elsewhere. Because of this specification, this tax will require a two-thirds vote to pass. The tax being considered in Berkeley is a 1-cent per ounce tax on sugary beverages and requires only a simple majority because revenue goes to the general fund.

As we've seen previously with proposed soda taxes, such as those in New York, Maine, Texas, Philadelphia, Washington, Colorado and even California, we're hearing the same arguments being made by those in favor of and those against this tax. Some of these include the argument that the tax would hurt low-income individuals while those in support of these measures argue that sugary beverages are causing the obesity epidemic and government intervention in the form of a tax on sugary beverages is the solution.

However, Sean McBride of DSM Strategic Communications and Consulting [presents a very on-point](#) [3] discussion of the implications of this tax. First, he points out that sugar does not cause obesity, too many calories and not enough physical activity do. And second, if this tax passes and citizens can no longer afford soda, they will replace soda with other calorie dense foods. In essence, this tax will get us nowhere.

Instead, as he says, and we agree, this is the solution: Whether in Mexico, California or any other corner of the nation or the world, science has already handed us the formula for rolling back obesity. Spend the time and the money to educate consumers how to eat right and move more. It

s proven. It works. Why do you think obesity rates among 2-5 year olds has decreased significantly in recent years? Moms and dads are starting to get the message. Even in the face of this overwhelming evidence, far too many leaders (some self appointed) continue to fail consumers with their passionate and near-sighted infatuation with tax policy as the silver bullet in the battle against obesity.

ACSH s Dr. Gilbert Ross adds, These soda taxes are clearly a ploy by the anti-soda people masquerading as a move for public health.

---

COPYRIGHT © 1978-2016 BY THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON SCIENCE AND HEALTH

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.acsh.org/news/2014/10/08/taxes-sugary-beverages-considered-california>

**Links**

[1] <http://acsh.org/2014/06/bloombergs-soda-ban-gets-third-bite-big-apple-states-highest-court/>

[2] [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/08/us/berkeley-officials-outspent-but-optimistic-in-battle-over-soda-tax.html?emc=edit\\_th\\_20141008&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=12253159](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/08/us/berkeley-officials-outspent-but-optimistic-in-battle-over-soda-tax.html?emc=edit_th_20141008&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=12253159)

[3] <http://www.dsmstrat-comm.com/#!/dsm-outlook-october-8/crdx>