

## Multnomah County Sugary Drink Tax: FAQs

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### On the Measure

#### Quick facts

- Adds a tax of 1.5 cents per ounce on sugary drinks
- Raises an estimated \$28.4 million per year in Multnomah County for local programs that promote kids' health and provide early education and literacy programs for low-income kids
- Reduces the incidence of diabetes in Multnomah County by 5 percent over a one-year period
- Products subject to the tax include soda, sports drinks, energy drinks, sweetened teas and other products that have added sugar
- Does not affect infant formula, milk products, natural fruit and vegetable juices

#### What is the goal of this initiative?

Our goal is simple: address the epidemic of nutrition-related disease and improve children's lives using three strategies.

1. Reduce sugar consumption
2. Teach children how to eat better and exercise more
3. Expand access to early education at the most critical period in their learning and development

#### Who is the opposition?

The big soda industry has spent millions to defeat this measure in other cities that have successfully enacted similar policies. We expect their opposition here as well.

#### Isn't this a regressive tax on low-income people?

Taxing sugary drinks is designed to reduce consumption among the entire population, and evidence shows that they work very well in doing so. We will take the revenues generated from this tax and put it back in programs that help people who need it most: young children in low-income communities.

#### Won't the tax hurt small businesses inside Multnomah County, driving people go elsewhere to purchase beverages?

Bottled water, natural fruit and vegetable juices —the alternatives for people who want to buy something else—are all made by the same companies, brought by the same truck drivers and sold in the same stores that dispense regular soda, so no, this will not hurt small businesses. Big tobacco said the same thing when communities asked to remove smoking from restaurants and bars—and they were wrong. Research has shown that business went up in places where people were free of second-hand smoke. Similarly, we're confident communities will thrive in environments that offer healthier drink alternatives.

## About the Coalition

### **Who is the Coalition of Healthy Kids and Education?**

We are a growing group of parents, doctors and nurses, elected officials, community leaders, and educators. With the American Heart Association in the lead, we are building a powerful coalition committed to the health and success of our kids.

### **What other organizations are part of the coalition?**

Enacting sugar sweetened beverage taxes are top priority for the American Heart Association. Building off momentum from successful campaigns in six cities across the country, AHA of Oregon has been working to bring together a coalition of local support in Multnomah County. We are excited about the early response we're getting and look forward to sharing more on our growing coalition.

### **Where do groups representing communities of color stand on this issue?**

We've reached out to a number of groups and will continue to make sure that communities of color are engaged and these groups have a voice at the table.

## On Mel Rader

### **Why is Mel Rader no longer working on this campaign?**

Mel provided us some valuable connections early on. Now that the coalition is growing, we're ready to take the process forward as a group.

### **What role did Mel play when he was engaged?**

Mel Rader had been helping bring together the coalition and played a role in connecting stakeholders. Mel is no longer engaged, though our work and our commitment goes on.

## About the Issue

### **What is the problem?**

One-third of all children are predicted to get preventable Type 2 diabetes in their lifetime. Studies have shown that taxes on unhealthy sugary drinks reduce soda consumption and

bring down the rate of chronic health conditions.

### **Why the focus on sugary drinks?**

Consumption among kids is on the rise, with sugary drinks being the largest source of added sugars in the diet of our kids. Drinking just one additional serving of a sugary drink per day significantly increases the chance that a child will face health threats such as heart disease and diabetes

### **Why not candy, cake, and/or other junk food that has added sugars?**

If we're serious about addressing health epidemics, we need to start with the biggest culprits and go where the science leads us, and that's right to sugary drinks. And we should put the money raised by the tax right back into the communities hurt the worst by this epidemic. Overall, this tax will help improve the communities where soda companies' practices have done the most damage.

### **What are the negative health impacts of frequent sugary drink consumption/What happens to our bodies when we consume so much sugar?**

Studies show that frequent consumption of sugary drinks is associated with a higher risk of developing other chronic diseases such as Type 2 diabetes and heart disease, and tooth decay. Soda has replaced milk in the diets of many children and this also puts them at risk for fragile and broken bones, and other bone diseases.