

SB646

TESTIMONY

SB 646
RELATING TO OBESITY PREVENTION

Senate Committee on Health

Public Hearing – February 6, 2013
2:15pm., State Capitol, Conference Room 229

By
Jay Maddock, Ph.D.

I am writing to **support** SB 646 with comments. This bill will impose a fee on sugar-sweetened beverages and fund community health centers and the trauma system special fund.

I am a professor of public health at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and have served as director of the Office of Public Health Studies since 2006. I also served as a member of the Childhood Obesity Taskforce that submit a draft of a similar bill as part of our comprehensive approach to address obesity in Hawaii. My statement on this measure does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

Obesity is a major public health problem in Hawaii. It contributes to premature death and disease and contributes significantly to the health care costs in the state which are paid for by businesses and tax payers. Comprehensive approaches are necessary to combat the obesity epidemic. There is no one magic bullet or thing that can be done to change the doubling of the obesity rate over the past two decades. However, sugar sweetened beverages are one of the leading culprits especially among children. Research has shown that children consume between 10-15% of their calories from sugar-sweetened beverages. There are also the most price sensitive. Several studies have shown that increases in tobacco taxes have led to an immediate and substantial reduction in smoking among youth. A similar effect would be expected for sugar sweetened beverage consumption.

A random digit dial telephone survey I conducted indicated that almost 2/3 of adults in Hawaii support a tax on sugar sweetened beverages if that money is used for obesity prevention programs. The proposed fee will help reduce consumption of sugar sweetened beverages in Hawaii. However, the funds **should** be directed towards making sure our keiki have a state where they can be active safely and have access to healthy, affordable foods.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [HTHTestimony](#)
Cc: Don.Couch@mauicounty.us
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB646 on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM*
Date: Friday, February 01, 2013 3:40:10 PM

SB646

Submitted on: 2/1/2013

Testimony for HTH on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Councilmember Don Couch	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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HO'ŌLA LĀHUI HAWAI'I
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Committee on Health

Josh Green, Chair

Rosalyn Baker, Vice-Chair

Commentary on Senate Bill 646

Relating to Health

Ho`ola Lahui Hawaii the only Federally Qualified Health Center and Native Hawaiian Health Care System wishes to make comment on the bill to provide additional revenue to the community health centers special fund. While we agree with the intent of this bill to place additional revenue into the community health centers special fund and that the overuse of sugary beverages contributes to poor health, we are concerned that an 18% tax on such items may be excessive.

If poverty stricken populations have a high incidence of obesity this bill will likely do little to change behavior as soft drinks along candy, cookies, ice cream are food items and are eligible items that can be purchased with EBT/SNAP cards. Energy drinks with high sugar content that have nutritional value also can be purchased in this manner.

It is vital that health centers have a continued source of funding other than revenue from payors and federal grants as to assure that there are funds for capital and equipment costs related to expansion. However, we are not sure that the bill in its current form addresses the true intent of reducing the use of sugary beverages amongst those receiving public assistance.

Respectfully Requested,

David Peters
Chief Executive Officer



HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (HFIA)
1050 Bishop St. Box 235
Honolulu, HI 96813
Fax : 808-791-0702
Telephone : 808-533-1292

DATE: Wednesday, February 6, 2013 TIME: 2:15 p.m PLACE: CR 229

TO: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Senator Josh Green, MD, Chair; Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

FROM: Hawaii Food Industry Association - Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

RE: SB 646 RELATING TO HEALTH

POSITION: HFIA strongly opposes this bill.

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

The legislature must stop taxing groceries. It is the most unfair and regressive way to fill the budget deficit.

The beverage industry is already doing more than its fair share to raise money for the State of Hawaii. The bottle bill has cost the industry a significant amount of profit percentage in surcharges and reduced sales. **Please don't pass on the tab for items that should be included in the state budget to the food and beverage industry.**

There is no empirical evidence supporting the argument that a soda tax will reduce consumers' collective calorie intake.

Although our consumption of soda has increased, soda still only represents 7 percent of our collective energy intake.

In an article recently published by STATS.org, Trevor Butterworth stated that while public health experts argue that a tax on sugared soda could help curb obesity,

economists are unconvinced. He went on to explain that there is no evidence of a linear relationship between soda and obesity.

Butterworth asks, "How much of a tax increase would lead to a meaningful reduction in consumption – and would that, in turn, lead to meaningful changes in diet and weight?" In the 33 states that have implemented soda taxes, including the five most obese states, little change has been detected.

An article published in Contemporary Economic Policy entitled "Can Soft Drink Taxes Reduce Population weight" examined how changes in states taxation rates from 1990 to 2006 have affected body mass index (BMI). "They found that a one percentage point increase in the tax rate was associated with a statistically significant decrease of 0.003 points in BMI. (To put this into context, the National Institutes for Health defines a person as having a normal weight if their BMI is between 18.5 and 24.9, and obese if their BMI is 30.0). As the researchers note, even a large tax increase of 20 percentage points might not have a substantial effect on population weight."

Food preference isn't an accurate healthy weight detector. A holistic look at calorie intake is a more appropriate way to determine an individual's propensity to achieve a health weight.

HFIA does not support tax increases, especially increases that will simply increase the costs to consumers at a time when taxpayers cannot afford such increases. **This tax is highly regressive and will impact the poor the most.**

If you pass this measure it will severely damage the retail and beverage industry, **costing the state many jobs.** The loss of these jobs will cost significantly more in the long run than the gains in revenue, which the proposed sugary beverage tax increase may generate.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



www.itoen.com

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ITO EN (NORTH AMERICA) INC.
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TEL 718 250 4000
FAX 718 246 1325

TO: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Roslyn Baker, Vice Chair

FROM: ITO EN (USA) Inc.
Wendy Chuck, Human Resources Manager

DATE: Wednesday February 6, 2013
TIME: 2:15 P.M.
PLACE: Conference Room 229

RE: OPPOSITION TO SB 646 RELATING TO HEALTH

I work for ITO EN (USA) Inc. which has been doing business in Hawaii since 1987. We are still only one of a handful of local beverage manufacturers and distributors in Hawaii. Our factory is located in Kalihi (Senator Chun-Oakland's district) and we employ 68 workers, some even live in this district.

It is disturbing to hear that our legislators again want to put a soft drink tax on the table. Our workforce has labored hard the past years to earn a living to support themselves and their families. Management has made sacrifices to preserve jobs and stay competitive as a local business. I see labor and benefit costs continue to rise each year and we strive to work harder and creatively to make our employees feel appreciated even when there are years with no pay raises.

Our customers, many of whom are middle to low income workers, spend their money on soft drinks and SB646 would unfairly target this segment of the community who has been hit hardest by the economy. Singling out one kind of grocery item for taxing is not fair, considering calories from sugar-sweetened beverages comprise only 7% of the American diet and that simple starches, fats and sweet foods, combined with a **lack of exercise** are the bigger reasons for obesity and related health problems.*
**(Source: National Cancer Institute Re-Analysis of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey: 2005-2006)*

The tax is unfairly aimed at only soft drinks sweetened with sucrose, fructose, glucose, and other sugars. These sweeteners can be found in more plentiful amounts in foods such as candies, bakery confections, frozen desserts, jams and jellies, and processed foods. Simple starches which raise blood sugar levels and saturated fats contribute to weight gain and are in your two scoops rice and mac salad, spam musubi, fried katsu plate and other popular foods. **Is a soft drink tax going to encourage people to eat healthier?** Maybe by switching to water people will have more money for the extra scoop of rice.

If you want to make a meaningful impact on people's lifestyle habits, I suggest a balanced and comprehensive message to consumers and students which includes exercise. For myself, I really don't need the government to increase my grocery bill in hopes to control what I want to buy with my own money. This tax is unfair, regressive, hurts our business, and not to mention, what an administrative nightmare to calculate a tax by the teaspoon! The tax does not motivate nor educate consumers to get proper diet, eat in moderation, exercise and brush after meals.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Twenty-Seventh Legislature
Regular Session of 2013

THE SENATE

Committee on Health

Senator Josh Green, M.D., Chair

Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

Hawaii State Capitol, Room 229

Wednesday, February 6, 2013; 2:15 p.m.

**STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON S.B. 646
RELATING TO HEALTH**

The ILWU Local 142 strongly opposes S.B. 646, which establishes a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages, syrup, and powder with the revenues generated to be deposited into the community health centers special fund and the trauma system special fund.

This measure poses the assumption that a tax on soda and other sugar-sweetened beverages can lead to a reduction in overall consumption. While that may be true, there is little evidence that a “soda tax” will lead to less consumption and improved health outcomes.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages will impact jobs in Hawaii. The ILWU represents more than 200 employees at Pepsi, which manufactures and distributes Pepsi products, and almost 100 employees at Ball Corporation, which produces aluminum cans for sodas and juice. These companies are two of a vanishing breed of manufacturing companies in Hawaii that employ hundreds of workers and pay good, union wages. Preserving these jobs should be foremost on the minds of legislators. Hawaii’s economy must be diversified—which means retaining jobs in manufacturing to balance jobs in the service economy and government.

The ILWU is concerned about the health of our residents and the growing problem of obesity among children and adults. However, taxing sugary beverages is not the answer.

People will not stop buying and consuming sugar-sweetened beverages just because of a tax. Even if they did, that may not curb or prevent obesity because there are any number of other unhealthy food choices that make people obese—cake, pastries, fast-food burgers, fries, all contribute to obesity. Why is soda and juice singled out?

S.B. 646 will impose taxes and raise money, yet the money will not even go toward education on obesity prevention. Instead, the money will go into special funds for Community Health Centers and a Trauma System, which has a tangential connection to obesity.

Individuals make decisions about what to eat and drink for themselves and their families based on a number of considerations. Cost may be one, but is not the only consideration. Changing behavior cannot effectively be accomplished by taxation. It’s a decision to be made by individuals, parents, and the family and must be facilitated by education.

The ILWU strongly urges this Committee to hold this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**Board of Directors**

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Victor Geminiani, Esq.

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
 Supporting and Commenting on SB 646 Relating to Health
 Senate Committee on Health
 Wednesday, February 6, 2013, 2:15 PM, Room 229

Thank you for an opportunity to testify in support of and comment on SB 646, which would establish a sugar sweetened beverage fee.

Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) law firm created to advocate on behalf of low income individuals and families in Hawai'i on civil legal issues of statewide importance. Our core mission is to help our clients gain access to the resources, services, and fair treatment that they need to realize their opportunities for self-achievement and economic security. We support the sugar sweetened beverage tax because it is part of a comprehensive response to obesity, a disease that disproportionately impacts low-income people.

Raising Revenue and Reducing Health Care Costs

- A modest tax on sugary beverages is an important tactic in addressing Hawai'i's obesity epidemic.
- A sugary beverage fee is a way to raise revenues for critical efforts to curb obesity while improving our residents' nutrition and lowering health care costs.
- The Center on Science in the Public Interest estimates that a \$0.10 state tax on 12 ounces of soda, close to the amount proposed in this bill, would bring in \$58 million annually.

A Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Fee Actually Benefits Low-Income People

- As advocates for the low-income, we are concerned about taxes that disproportionately impact those in poverty but recognize that low-income people will ultimately benefit from a sugary beverage tax.
- Obesity is a regressive disease that disproportionately impacts the poor.
- Reduced sugar sweetened beverage consumption will mitigate health inequities, and individuals will realize long-term savings in health care costs that will far outweigh the tax burden created by this bill.
- Taxes drive consumption down, so lower-income people may pay less or the same amount in taxes.

Part of a Comprehensive Solution to the Obesity Epidemic

- There is no one answer to the obesity crisis, but reducing consumption of sugary beverages is part of a holistic approach.
- Physical activity is not a quick fix for obesity. It would take a child weighing 100 pounds about 50 minutes of solid biking to burn off the 240 calories contained in just one 20 ounce soda. This example demonstrates that exercise is essential for healthy weight maintenance, but also shows that physical activity alone is insufficient to address excessive consumption of empty calories from sugar. Nor does eating produce and whole grains negate the calories consumed from sugary beverages.
- Obesity must be tackled through a comprehensive public health approach. A sugary beverage tax changes the overall environment of food choice by encouraging consumers to make healthier selections. Food choices are not made in a vacuum, and we cannot value corporate income over our community's health.

Obesity Prevention Funding

We respectfully encourage the Committee to consider devoting revenues from the sugar sweetened beverage fee to obesity prevention efforts. Funding for community health centers and the trauma system special fund are very worthy initiatives, but we also note that the nexus between sugar sweetened beverages and obesity, a serious public health crisis, is strong. Sugar-sweetened soft drinks are the only food or beverage proven to increase the risk of becoming overweight or obese. A dedicated effort to comprehensively prevent obesity in Hawai'i is urgently needed to protect the health of our entire community and especially our keiki, among whom obesity is increasing rapidly.

Testimony to oppose Bill SB 1085

I feel if the State truly wished to combat obesity in Hawaii, then it would propose a bill to cover all prepared foods and beverages that exceed a certain calorie intake. At the same time the State should also propose a bill to enforce mandatory exercise daily...kind of outrageous! It is sad when our own government feels its people need to be guided towards a life style that they deem appropriate. What happened to free will...now it comes with a price!

Also to go after the beverages again after increase in bottle taxes...seems the State found a money maker to fill its coffers in the guise of Health Care! Why not, it already did it in the guise of Environment! And where did all that money go!!!

If our State truly believed that our Health Care is their responsibility, then it should do something about reducing Health care cost. Then maybe people will go to the doctors more often and be educated from the experts on how to live a Healthy lifestyle.

From: [Mailing List](#)
To: [HTHTestimony](#)
Cc: eugene.yamashiro@parbev.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB646 on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM
Date: Monday, February 04, 2013 8:58:36 AM

SB646

Submitted on: 2/4/2013

Testimony for HTH on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eugene Yamashiro	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I'm opposed to this bill since i don't think it will accomplish it's intended goal

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Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB646 on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM*
Date: Monday, February 04, 2013 2:48:30 PM

SB646

Submitted on: 2/4/2013

Testimony for HTH on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jamie Harada	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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Cc: mendezj@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB646 on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM*
Date: Friday, February 01, 2013 1:53:54 PM

SB646

Submitted on: 2/1/2013

Testimony for HTH on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: [Kent Kurihara](#)
To: [HTHTestimony](#)
Subject: SB646
Date: Tuesday, February 05, 2013 12:09:35 PM

February 5, 2013

To: Sen. Josh Green
Sen. Rosalyn H. Baker

RE: SB 646 Relating to Health

Hearing Date: February 6, 2013

Hearing Time: 2:15 pm

Testifier: (Kent Kurihara / Hawaiian Sun Products, Inc.)

Position: Oppose

Hawaiian Sun Products, Inc. formally and strongly opposes SB646 & SB1085 regarding a tax on Sugary Beverages. We have firm reservations against the unfair taxation of our specific industry, and the hard-working individuals that make up its workforce. We cannot support taxation, whose negative effects will impact workers and household budgets across the state. We especially cannot ignore the idea that our local government wants to regulate our life and lifestyle, and that they would discriminatory taxes as a means of control. We also cannot stop looking past the disguised attempt to use public health as the vehicle for increasing tax revenues. As it stands, SB646 & SB1085 cannot be responsibly described as beneficial to the State of Hawaii and its residents.

DISCRIMINATORY TAXATION – These bills' discriminatory nature is clearly evident by its singular focus on sugary drinks, even though no claim can be made that sugary drinks are the singular source of obesity, diabetes, and other related health problems. This is akin to the assessment of fees attached to the sales of beverage containers in Hawaii. Beverage containers are not the singular source of trash, but are singled out for "taxation" to combat our trash problems and force the public into the *lifestyle* of recycling. As it stands, the bill appears to be just another source of revenue, focused on punishing the consumer and exploiting the national brands and their seemingly deep pockets. But these taxes negatively affect us all, especially in the small beverage manufacturing community of Hawaii.

PROPER AND SPECIFIC USAGE OF TAX REVENUE – There is NO guarantee that the monies generated by these taxes and fees will be appropriated correctly. The HI5 fund was raided recently to pay for general operations of the state. Who is going to GUARANTEE that revenues will be used specifically for the purposes stated? What other "sin" taxes will contribute to the obesity program established in SB1085? Why are the funds from SB646 not specifically allocated to obesity prevention?

LIFESTYLE MODIFICATION THROUGH TAXATION - There should be a focus on education, not taxation. Our family and community members buy what they want to eat/drink. Our job, as

manufacturers, is to bring these specific items to market. Consumers have the right to choose what they eat without the burden of taxation, or their government trying to make their dietary decisions for them. Currently, with the cooperation of the Food and Drug Administration, we provide as much dietary information as necessary on all of our food containers. The consumers have enough information at their disposal to make their own dietary choices. Let them exercise their rights as individuals.

Sincerely,

Kent Kurihara

Vice-President

Hawaiian Sun Products, Inc.

From: [Mailing List](#)
To: [HTHTestimony](#)
Cc: lane_bcd@hotmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB646 on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM*
Date: Monday, February 04, 2013 11:23:55 AM

SB646

Submitted on: 2/4/2013

Testimony for HTH on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lane T. Muraoka	Big City Diner	Oppose	No

Comments:

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Cc: mark.kubota@parbev.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB646 on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM*
Date: Monday, February 04, 2013 8:35:01 AM

SB646

Submitted on: 2/4/2013

Testimony for HTH on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mark Kubota	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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From: [Mailing List](#)
To: [HTHTestimony](#)
Cc: Michael.Nobriga@mauisoda.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB646 on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM
Date: Monday, February 04, 2013 1:40:38 PM

SB646

Submitted on: 2/4/2013

Testimony for HTH on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Nobriga	Maui Soda & Ice Works, Ltd.	Oppose	No

Comments: I am opposed to SB646. We are already at a major disadvantage being an independently owned and operated small business on Maui. I do not have the resources to take on anymore additional accounting and reporting. It has already strained my operation with the current deposit & container fee requirements. Even worse when you raised the container fee half of a cent. Do any of you realize how difficult it is to administer a half of a cent on uneven sales? There is already tons of money in your Department of Health Bank Account from unclaimed deposits and container fees to fund all these programs, and more. Please, no more rape and pillaging your poor local businesses.

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Testimony for SB646
Institute a Tax on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages
February 4, 2013

Nancy Redfeather

Dear Chair Green and Members of the Committee,

I am the Director of The Kohala Center's Hawai'i Island School Garden Network, working with 65 schools and school garden programs on Hawai'i Island public/private/charter K-12, a member of the Hawai'i Farm to School and School Garden Hui, a statewide coalition of School Garden Networks and supporting government, institution, and organizations, and a member of the Policy and Advocacy Working Group of the DOH School Garden Task Force.

I see daily the disconnection children have with their food and food choices, and the consequences that inadequate nutrition has on academic achievement. According to our DOE Survey of School Gardens in 2012, there are 168 schools statewide that are starting or building school gardens and hands-on nutritional education into the core curriculum of the school. This is an unprecedented opportunity to change our children's health future. But these programs need our support. Perhaps a small portion of this tax could also go to support these programs. Research says that whatever a child grows they will eat. We can change children's eating awareness and habits through work in the outdoor classroom. This is a window of opportunity to change not only the health of our future citizens, but also elevate the level of health in our adult population as these funds can be allocated for increasing community health care services.

It is commonly known across America that our children's health is in crisis.

Hawaii is facing an obesity epidemic of historical proportion.

Approximately 1 in 3 children entering kindergarten are overweight or obese.ⁱ Childhood obesity increased 29 percent from 1999 to 2011.ⁱⁱ

In Hawaii, approximately one in four adults in Hawaii are obese. From 2000 to 2010, the percentage of adults considered obese increased 48 percent.ⁱⁱⁱ

Additionally, there are major health disparities across racial and ethnic groups. For instance, 44 percent of Native Hawaiians adults are obese compared to 14 percent of Japanese adults.

Economic Impact of Obesity:

Obesity is affecting our society in many ways including driving up health care costs.

Obesity-related medical expenditures in Hawaii were calculated to be over \$470 million in 2009, and are continuing to rise.

Addressing this complex, multifaceted problem urgently requires policy and environmental changes that reach the entire population. Progressive and innovative legislation such as this bill are needed to make healthy choices the easier option.

Alternative options are readily available to drink instead of sugary beverages.

The sugar-sweetened beverage fee will raise approximately \$38 million in new revenue in 2014-15.

Revenue collected will go into a fund to support childhood and adult obesity prevention and health promotion.

The coalition of School Garden Network Leaders is available for consultation on the details of these programs. The complete 2013 Summary of the 2012 Statewide Survey of School Gardens will be ready the second week of February.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my thoughts, and Mahalo Senator Green for supporting our keiki and adult communities so that they may have the opportunity to change their health for the better, and improve the quality of their lives.

Sincerely,

Nancy Redfeather

Director – Hawai'i Island School Garden Network

Hawai'i Farm to School and School Garden Hui

School Garden Task Force

www.kohalacenter.org/HISGN/about.html

www.kohalacenter.org/HISGN/eatthinkgrow/about.html

www.kohalacenter.org/teachertraining/about.html

nredfeather@kohalacenter.org

808-322-201

ⁱ Pobutsky A and Bradbury E. 2011. Surveillance of Overweight/Obesity in Hawaii Public School Students Entering Kindergarten in 2002-2003 and 2007-2008. Hawaii State Department of Health, Chronic Disease Management and Control Branch. Poster presentation for the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Annual Conference, 2011.

ⁱⁱ CDC State Youth Risk Behavior Surveys, 2011

ⁱⁱⁱ Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Study (BRFSS)

TO: Members of the Committee on Health

FROM: Natalie Iwasa
Honolulu, HI 96825
808-395-3233

HEARING: 2:15 p.m. Wednesday, February 6, 2013

SUBJECT: SB 646 Beverage Tax - **OPPOSED**

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 626 which would create a new tax on sugar-sweetened beverages to fund community health centers and the trauma system special fund. I oppose this new tax.

Rather than creating more bureaucracy with a new fund, taxing people who aren't obese or even overweight and making it harder for retailers to do their business, why not create *incentives* for people to maintain healthy lifestyles? Why not make it easier for people to get from point A to point B by using their own energy, e.g., walking or biking?

Please vote "no" on this bill.

TO: Members of the Committee on Health

FROM: Natalie Iwasa
Honolulu, HI 96825
808-395-3233

HEARING: 2:15 p.m. Wednesday, February 6, 2013

SUBJECT: SB 646 Beverage Tax - **OPPOSED**

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 626 which would create a new tax on sugar-sweetened beverages to fund community health centers and the trauma system special fund. I oppose this new tax.

Rather than creating more bureaucracy with a new fund, taxing people who aren't obese or even overweight and making it harder for retailers to do their business, why not create *incentives* for people to maintain healthy lifestyles? Why not make it easier for people to get from point A to point B by using their own energy, e.g., walking or biking?

Please vote "no" on this bill.



February 6, 2013
2:15 p.m.
Conference Room 229

TESTIMONY TO
THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

RE: SB 646 – Relating to Health

Chair Green, Vice Chairs Baker, and the members of the committee,

My name is Robert Witt and I am executive director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS), which represents 99 private and independent schools in Hawaii and educates over 33,000 students statewide.

HAIS supports SB 646 which establishes a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages, syrup, and powder with the revenues generated to be deposited into the community health centers special fund and the trauma system special fund.

Approximately 1 in 3 children entering kindergarten in Hawaii is overweight or obese. Each additional 12-ounce soft drink consumed per day by children increases their odds of becoming obese by 60%. Additionally, currently 23% of Hawaii's adults are obese and another 34% are overweight; both of these conditions are accompanied by a slew of associated health problems including cardiovascular risk, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and dental erosion, to name just a few. Because of the contribution of the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages to obesity, as well as the health consequences that are independent of weight, the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages generates excess health care costs.

Increasing the cost of sugar-sweetened beverages via the proposed tax will prevent obesity and promote better health practices, especially among children. The fee will decrease consumption of SSBs, improve nutrition across the state, and thus improve weight status and health. The fee will also raise revenue to reduce current program reductions while supporting new health initiatives. Finally, the fee is supported by the public; according to a poll cast in December 2011, 65.6% of adults in Hawaii support a sugar-sweetened beverage tax if the revenue is used to address the prevention of childhood obesity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [HTHTestimony](#)
Cc: bull41@msn.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB646 on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM
Date: Monday, February 04, 2013 6:25:51 PM

SB646

Submitted on: 2/4/2013

Testimony for HTH on Feb 6, 2013 14:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
William Hughes	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I oppose this tax because this will effect many jobs here in Hawaii.

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