
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE BENEFITS OF
ESTABLISHING A SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGE SURCHARGE PROGRAM
TO FUND PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS IN THE STATE.

1 WHEREAS, the prevalence of obesity, diabetes, and tooth
2 decay in Hawaii has increased dramatically over the past decade,
3 and obesity-related medical expenditures in Hawaii were
4 calculated to be over \$470,000,000 in 2009 and are continuing to
5 increase; and

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7 WHEREAS, there is overwhelming evidence of the link between
8 obesity, diabetes, and tooth decay and the consumption of sugar-
9 sweetened beverages, including soft drinks, energy drinks, sweet
10 teas, and sports drinks; and

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12 WHEREAS, according to nutritional experts, sugar-sweetened
13 beverages offer little or no nutritional value, but contain
14 massive quantities of added sugars; and

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16 WHEREAS, a twenty-ounce bottle of soda contains the
17 equivalent of approximately sixteen teaspoons of sugar, yet the
18 American Heart Association recommends that Americans consume no
19 more than five to nine teaspoons of sugar per day; and

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21 WHEREAS, research shows that almost half of the extra
22 calories Americans consume in their diet comes from sugar-
23 sweetened beverages, with the average American drinking nearly
24 fifty gallons of sugar-sweetened beverages a year, the
25 equivalent of thirty-nine pounds of extra sugar every year; and

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27 WHEREAS, sugar is the primary and necessary factor in the
28 development of tooth decay; and

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30 WHEREAS, in addition to sugar, the acids found in beverages
31 like soda, energy drinks, and juice erode tooth enamel, making



1 sugar-sweetened beverage consumption one of the most significant
2 contributors to dental caries in children; and
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4 WHEREAS, children from families of low socioeconomic status
5 have a significantly higher consumption of soda and other types
6 of sugar-sweetened beverages; and
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8 WHEREAS, according to the 2012 Rethink Your Drink
9 Adolescent post-test survey, adolescents in Hawaii drink an
10 average of 8.6 cans, glasses, or bottles of sugar-sweetened
11 beverages per week, and nearly all boys (ninety-four percent)
12 and girls (ninety-three percent) consumed at least one serving
13 of a sugar-sweetened beverage in the past week; and
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15 WHEREAS, experiences in state after state demonstrate that
16 higher cigarette taxes are one of the most effective ways to
17 reduce smoking among both youth and adults, as studies have
18 demonstrated that increasing the price of cigarettes directly
19 impacts consumer behavior by reducing consumption, and this
20 impact may be transferable to sugar-sweetened beverages; now,
21 therefore,
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23 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-ninth
24 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2017, the
25 House of Representatives concurring, that the Auditor is
26 requested to conduct a study on the benefits of establishing a
27 1-cent per fluid ounce surcharge on the sale of sugar-sweetened
28 beverages sold by distributors to retailers to fund public
29 health programs in the State; and
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include information
32 on net operating costs and expected generated revenue that can
33 benefit public health programs in obesity, diabetes, and oral
34 health; and
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study examine the
37 collection of fees for a sugar-sweetened beverage surcharge
38 program; and
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40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that by July 1, 2017, the Department
41 of Health is requested to share specific data on the present



1 system of fee collection to the Auditor to facilitate the study
2 and allow for completion of the study in a timely manner; and
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Auditor is requested to
5 submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including
6 any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than
7 twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
8 2018; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
11 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Auditor, Director of
12 Health, and Director of Human Services.

