

New Revenue for a Healthier Future

Support the Health and Prevention Fund

THE CHALLENGE

Nearly 1 out of 3 kids are overweight, resulting in increased risk of chronic illnesses such as diabetes, asthma, and heart disease. The number of overweight teenagers tripled in the last 30 years.

Diabetes rates have tripled since 1980. Diabetes is a serious illness. In addition to its human cost, it costs Massachusetts \$3.4 billion a year, 7% of our entire state health care costs.

Drinking sugared beverages is linked to weight increases, risk for diabetes, poor nutrition, and displacement of healthier beverages. Today, children's consumption of sugar sweetened beverages exceeds their consumption of milk.

WHAT WE CAN DO

- Align tax policy with public health goals.
- **Forty other states** tax sweetened beverages and/or snack food. Arkansas has taxed soft drinks for close to two decades, producing an average \$40 million dollars revenue annually.
- Evidence indicates that even small taxes can lead to reductions in consumption of soft drinks. Larger taxes can contribute to weight reduction.



A HEALTH AND PREVENTION FUND financed by removing the sales tax exemption for soda and candy would:

- **RAISE AN ESTIMATED \$51.7 MILLION ANNUALLY** by removing the sales tax exemptions for these products.
- Discourage consumption of unhealthy snacks and soft drinks by children, youth and adults.
- Create benefits for those most affected by overweight and related diseases.
- Finance public health programs to keep communities and residents healthy — such as programs to support equal access to healthy food and exercise, school-based health programs, teenage pregnancy prevention, domestic violence and sexual assault prevention, work force expansion services and other critical programs that support the wellness of residents of the commonwealth.



MAKE A BOLD MOVE FOR SENSIBLE REVENUE

- **Support the Health and Prevention Fund**
- **CO-SPONSOR Representative Patrick's budget amendment #329**

References: MA Health Policy Forum, CDC, NE Journal of Medicine, American Diabetes Assoc, Yale Rudd Center. University of Illinois at Chicago Health Policy Center