

Member, Board of Supervisors
District 10



City and County of San Francisco

MALIA COHEN
馬莉亞郭嫻

July 27, 2016

Barbara Carr
Voter Information Division, Publications
Department of Elections, City and County of San Francisco
City Hall Room 48
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102
Sent via email

RE: Request for reconsideration of approved digest – Tax on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages

Dear Ms. Carr;

I had the opportunity to review the draft digest the Ballot Simplification Committee has prepared for the ballot measure to the proposed Tax on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages. I respectfully request that you consider the following changes to the digest.

▪ **The Way It Is Now**
(Addition indicated in underline)

The City does not impose a tax on the distribution of sugar-sweetened beverages.
Consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages is linked to serious health problems.

This change reaffirms the existing findings that are in the legal text of the measure and addresses the policy goal of the ballot measure

▪ **The Proposal**
(First paragraph, additions indicated in underline)

Proposition ___ would place a distributor tax of one cent per ounce on sugar-sweetened beverages. A sugar-sweetened beverage is a beverage that contains added sugar and 25 or more calories per 12 ounces, including some soft drinks, sports drinks, iced tea, juice drinks and energy drinks. The tax would also apply to syrups and powders that can be made into sugar-sweetened beverages in a beverage-dispensing machine, such as fountain drinks.

This first change clarifies that the proposed tax is only on distributors of sugar-sweetened beverages, not consumers. The second change clarifies where one may find said “syrups and powders.”

(Second paragraph, additions indicated in underline)

Only the distributors of sugar-sweetened beverages in San Francisco would be responsible for paying the tax. The tax would not apply to retail sales. The tax would not apply to other grocery products.

This change clarifies that this tax only applies to the distribution of sugar-sweetened beverages, not other grocery products.

(Sixth paragraph)

A 16-member Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee would evaluate the impact of the tax on beverage pricing, consumer purchasing behavior, and public health. The Committee would also advise the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors about how to reduce the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages in San Francisco.

The City could use the proceeds of the tax for any governmental purpose.

We propose moving the description of Advisory Committee above the paragraph describing the proceeds of the tax.

▪ **A “YES” Vote Means:**

If you vote “yes,” you want the City to collect a tax ~~to place a tax~~ of one cent per ounce ~~from the distributors of sugar-sweetened beverages~~ ~~on sugar-sweetened beverages.~~

This change clarifies that this is a distributor tax and that the City of San Francisco will collect the tax revenues. This is also modeled after the approved digest language of Prop E in 2014.

▪ **A “NO” Vote Means:**

If you vote “no,” you do not want the City to collect a one cent per ounce tax from the distributors of sugar-sweetened beverages ~~to place a tax of one cent per ounce on sugar-sweetened beverages.~~

This change clarifies that this is a distributor tax and that the City of San Francisco will collect the tax revenues. This is also modeled after the language of Prop E in 2014.

Thank you for your consideration of these requested changes.

Sincerely,



Malia Cohen
Member, San Francisco Board of Supervisors