

Cook County Board Budget Presentation

October 13, 2016

Public Comment in Support of Proposed Sugary Beverage Tax

Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Cook County Board Proposed Sweetened Beverage Tax. My name is Mary Elsner. I am the Director of Obesity Prevention Initiatives at the Illinois Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics. I am also a resident of Cook County and the mother of a teenager.

Nearly 20% of high school students in Illinois drink one or more cans of soda per day. The contribution of sugary drinks to obesity in children is now clearly established. Sufficient scientific evidence demonstrates that decreasing consumption of sugary drinks reduces childhood obesity and costly obesity-related disease, such as type 2 diabetes.

For these reasons, pediatricians in Illinois support a tax on sugary beverages when the funds from the tax go to medical services and prevention efforts that benefit children, families, and communities most at risk of developing obesity-related chronic conditions.