



2018 New York State YMCA

Youth And Government

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FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: Senate Liberty 3

Bill #:SL-22

1 **Sponsors:** Kerishma Thakur, Tracey Weng, Lourdes Sares-McCabe, Karen Urrutia

2

3 **An Act To:**

4 Follow in the footsteps of Berkely and Philadelphia in implementing a tax on each
5 ounce of sugar in sugary beverages, and use the revenue to fund health programs
6 and other health facilities.

7

8 ***The People of the State of New York, represented in the Senate and***
9 ***Assembly do enact as follows:***

10

11 **Purpose:**

12 The purpose of this bill is to reduce the negative health impacts of excessive sugar
13 consumption on New York citizens. A tax on each ounce of sugar found in sugar-
14 sweetened beverages such as soda, sports drinks, energy drinks, and sweetened
15 iced teas will help discourage consumers from buying these drinks.

16

17 **Summary of Provisions:**

18 Section 1

19 Consumer: a person who purchases goods and services for personal use

20 Retailer: a person or business that sells goods to the public in relatively small
21 quantities for use or consumption rather than for resale

22 Obesity: abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a risk to health

23 Diabetes: a disease in which the body's ability to produce or respond to the
24 hormone insulin is impaired, resulting in abnormal metabolism of carbohydrates
25 and elevated levels of glucose in the blood and urine

26 Sugar: a sweet crystalline substance obtained from various plants, especially sugar
27 cane and sugar beet, consisting essentially of sucrose, and used as a sweetener in
28 food and drink.

29

30 Section 2:

31

32 **Justification:**

33 Obesity has been a long-term problem in the United States, with the country
34 having the highest rate of childhood obesity, and one of the highest rates of overall
35 obesity in the world. Obesity is also the second leading cause of preventable
36 deaths, with an estimated 300,000 deaths per year. The US also leads the world
37 with the highest amount of added sugars in beverages. Overall, 30 million
38 Americans have diabetes and more than 84 million are at risk of developing type 2



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39 diabetes throughout their lifetime. In New York, 25% of adults are now classified as
40 obese and that's still one of the 7 lowest rates in the country. The consumption of
41 sugar has a direct relationship to the development of multiple health conditions like
42 type two diabetes, heart disease, obesity, dental decay, etc. By implementing a tax
43 on sugar in beverages, New York can help reduce the negative health effects that
44 the consumption of sugar can pose on its citizens.

45 The sugar tax has been found to be very effective in discouraging the
46 consumption of sugary beverages. Cities such as Philadelphia and Berkeley have
47 already implemented a sugar tax and have seen a substantial drop in the sales of
48 sugary beverages. Philadelphia has had their sugar tax in place for about 2 ½ years
49 now, and the overall beverage sales in the city has dropped by around 30-50%. As
50 of 2019, the tax has generated a revenue of \$207.3 million. That revenue has been
51 able to go towards community school funding, libraries, parks, and other
52 recreational facilities. New York could do just the same! The money brought in from
53 the tax could be used to further programs to curb obesity, treat diabetic patients,
54 fund healthier eating options for schools in low-income neighbourhoods, and create
55 jobs for those who will be affected by the taxes effect on their jobs. The possibilities
56 are quite endless.

57

58 **Fiscal Implications:**

59 A tax of 1.50-2 cents on each ounce of sugar in specified will cause more expensive
60 prices and lower-income families will have a harder time trying to obtain these
61 drinks. Beverage companies will also suffer large financial setbacks unless they
62 choose to reformulate their products. This money would then be used to fund
63 health programs for diabetics and those suffering from obesity in order to try and
64 reduce the costs of healthcare for New York state.

65

66 **Environmental Implications:**

67 A sugar tax has not yet been found to have any known environmental implications.

68

69 **Effective Date:**

70 The bill will be in effect by latest, the start of the 2021 fiscal year.

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