Follow-Up Issues from 7/11/2009 Fuels Tax Legislative Sub-Committee Meeting

- Non-motorized trail funding
- Idaho in comparison to other states funding.
- Resident/Non-Resident Camping rates
- Current IDPR fee structure

Non-Motorized Trail Funding

As mentioned in our first meeting, that portion of Recreation Trails Program (RTP) Funding (*Federal Fuels Tax associated with non-highway funding*) is the primary "dedicated" source of non-motorized trail funding in Idaho. This federal program managed by IDPR, is funded by a portion of federal gas tax. This is the program that was patterned after Idaho's use of the state fuel tax. Available funding is allocated in the following manner: 30 % non-motorized, 40% multiple use and 30% motorized. The total funding for the program in Idaho was 1.5 million for SFY 2010 of which approximately $1 million of that went to non-motorized trail projects across Idaho.

In addition to the RTP revenue, Idaho's Park N' Ski program provides some funding for the exclusive use of non-motorized trail use. At designated park lots Nordic skiers pay $25 (annual pass) or $7.50 (3-day pass) to park. The money is distributed back to local areas to plow lots, sign routes and groom trails. Revenue from this program provides approximately $20,000 annually for these endeavors.

The following is how some of the other states provide non-motorized funding:

- RTP grants (federal gas tax) all states
- Nordic skiers pass to park and ski (OR, WA, ID, MN and CA)
- Lottery (Colorado)
- Local trail system user fees and bonding – mostly at a local government level

Beyond RTP and a couple of Nordic ski programs in the "snow-belt" states, non-motorized trails funding is lacking in most every state.

While previous efforts have been made to galvanize the non-motorized community in the same fashion as the motorized community, legislative attempts to create a dedicated funding source through a registration process have historically been met with strong resistance.

Unless the non-motorized community is willing to bring forth legislation to tax themselves, it remains unlikely the current situation will improve significantly.

Parks and Recreation budget cuts in Idaho as compared to other states

While it is exceedingly difficult to quantify how IDPR can be measured against other states in terms of "treatment" from their respective legislatures, we were able to find some information from neighboring states that speaks to the issue.

Oregon – Their park system is actually expanding, due to their legislature's decision to allocate 7 ½ percent of the state lottery to their Parks and Recreation funding.

Washington – The only NEW revenue source passed this last legislative session was actually for Parks and Recreation – increased motor vehicle registration fee. In spite of that effort, they are closing 1 of 4 regional offices and reducing staff. Washington has over 100 state parks.

Wyoming – Received at 10 percent budget cut overall. Staff was reduced by one position. They also cut $1.8 from their deferred maintenance budget.

California- Early on it was proposed to close approximately half of their parks by SFY 2011. Instead of many of their parks closing, the Legislature in July cut $8 million which is still being worked through, but will involve staff furloughs and other cuts. California has 270 state parks.

Idaho – IDPR has experienced a 56 percent reduction (Just under $3 million) from the FY2009 Appropriation. For FY 2010 the Department lost another 11% of the personnel appropriation. To accomplish this cut we've cut about 25% percent of our FY2010 seasonal personal budget – approximately 70 seasonal staff. Impacts are to customer service – restroom cleaning, maintenance, interpretation/education, etc.

Alaska – Received an increase of several hundred thousand in general funds, 8 new staff, and increases to maintenance budget.

*Source information from the National Association of State Parks Directors

Resident/Non-Resident Camping Fees

To date, the only state we were able to find that differentiated between residents and non-residents where camping was concerned, was Wyoming. They charge $10 for residents and $17 for non-residents. Most states have moved away from an out of state fee due to the impact tourism dollars have on each of their respective economies.

There were however, a number of states that had different rates between residents and non-residents for day-use type fees. Those differences are as follows:

Day Use

State	Resident	Non-Resident	Difference
Connecticut	$10.00	$15.00	$5.00
Delaware	$4.00	$8.00	$4.00
Indiana	$5.00	$10.00	$5.00
Maryland	$5.00	$6.00	$1.00
Michigan	$6.00	$8.00	$2.00
Rhode Island	$7.00	$14.00	$7.00
Wisconsin	$7.00	$10.00	$3.00
Wyoming	$4.00	$6.00	$2.00
		Average Difference	**$3.63**

Annual Pass

State	Resident	Non-Resident	Difference
Connecticut	$50.00	$75.00	$25.00
Delaware	$27.00	$54.00	$27.00
Indiana	$36.00	$46.00	$10.00
Maryland	$75.00	$100.00	$25.00
Massachusetts	$35.00	$45.00	$10.00
Michigan	$24.00	$29.00	$5.00
Rhode Island	$30.00	$60.00	$30.00
Wisconsin	$25.00	$35.00	$10.00
Wyoming	$25.00	$44.00	$19.00
		Average Difference	**$17.89**

Current IDPR Fee Structure

OPE. 5:02, 03 DOCUMENTATION OF BOARD-APPROVED FEES - Statewide fees go through the IDAPA process where maximum fee levels are proposed by the Board and approved by the Legislature. The Board sets the actual Board approved fees that will be charged all park units. Park specific facility use fees will be set by the Board and posted in the parks. All fees listed in IDAPA Rule 26.01.20.225.02 are maximum fees, unless otherwise stated.

The Board Policy Fee Tables are as follows:

BOARD POLICY FEE TABLES

STATEWIDE FEES

IDAPA **RULE #**		**IDAPA Approved Maximum Fee**	Current Board **Approved Fee (07-30-2008)**
Chapter 20	***Campsites***		
250.05	Facility Deposit		$275.00 Maximum
225.06	**Fee Collection Surcharge**	$5.00	$5.00
225.07	**Admission Fee for Educational Opportunity**	$10.00/person	$10.00/person Maximum
250.01	**Campsites**		
	Primitive Campsite	$13.00	$ 9.00/day
	Campsite	$16.00	$12.00/day
	Off-Season Discount		$ 9.00/day
	Campsite/W	$20.00	$16.00/day
	Campsite/E	$20.00	$16.00/day
	Campsite/W, E	$24.00	$20.00
	Campsite/W, E, SWR	$26.00	$22.00
	Companion Campsite	Site type multiplied by two (2)	Site type multiplied by two (2)
	Off-Season Discount		$17.00/site
	Use of Campground Showers by Non Campers	$3.00/person	$3.00/person
	Limited Income Discount	$4.00/day	$4.00/day
	Resident 100% Service-related Disabled Idaho Veterans Fee	Waived	Waived

BOARD POLICY FEE TABLES

STATEWIDE FEES

250.01	Senior Citizen Discount – Pursuant to Section 67-4223, Idaho Code, and at the discretion of the Director, IDPR may provide, at selected under-utilized locations and times, a senior citizen discount.	Maximum 50% of RV camping fee	Maximum 50% of RV camping fee
	Extra Vehicle Charge	**$7.00**	$5.00

IDAPA RULE #		**IDAPA Approved Maximum Fee**	Current Board **Approved Fee (07-30-2008)**
	Camper Cabins and Yurts		
	Camper Cabins	$150.00/night	$45.00/night Maximum
	Yurts	$150.00/night	$72.00/night Maximum
	Deluxe Cabins (Bath, Kitchen, Multi-Room)	$150.00/night	$150.00/night Maximum
	Each additional person above the sleeping capacity of the facility	$12.00/night	$12.00/night
250.02	*Individual Campsite Reservation Service Fees*		
	Reservation Fee (Waived for campers with a current Idaho RV registration sticker)	$10.00/site	$10.00/site
	Modification Fee	$10.00/site	$10.00/site
	Cancellation Fee	$10.00/site	$10.00/site
250.03	**Day Use Fees**		
	Annual Charge per Motorized Vehicle	$35.00	$25.00
	Second Vehicle	$ 5.00	$ 5.00
	Daily Charge per Motorized Vehicle	$ 5.00/day	$ 4.00/day
	In accordance with Board Policy OPE.5:01, 05, 08, the following individuals or groups are exempt from payment of Day Use Fees.		
	Resident 100% Service-related Disabled Idaho Veterans Fee	Waived	Waived
	Vehicles displaying tax-exempt license plates or operating under contract with a public agency eligible for tax-exempt license plates	Waived	Waived
	Members of the Nez Perce and the Coeur d`Alene Tribes with appropriate identification	Waived	Waived
	Existing cabin, float home, and moorage lessees	Waived	Waived
250.05	**Group Facility Fees**		

	Reservation Service Fee	$25.00	$25.00
	Group Facility Overnight Per Person Fee	$3.00/person	$3.00/day
250.06	*Boating Facilities*		
	Vessel Launching (per vessel, per day)	$5.00/day	$4.00/day
	Overnight Moorage - applicable to persons registered to camp	$5.00/night	$5.00/night
	Overnight Moorage (persons camping on vessel)		
	Any length vessel	$8.00/night	$8.00/night
	Any length vessel moored at buoy	$5.00/night	$5.00/night

IDAPA **RULE #**		**IDAPA Approved Maximum Fee**	Current Board **Approved Fee (07-30-2008)**
250.10	**Premium Nordic Ski Grooming Program Fee** (Required in addition to Day Use Fees at Board Approved Sites: Harriman and Ponderosa)		
	Per person/day	$4.00/person	$2.00/person
	Per family/year	$35.00	$35.00
	Park N' Ski Parking Permit		
	Annual	$30.00	$25.00
	Temporary (three [3] consecutive days)	$10.00	$7.50

PARK SPECIFIC FEES

	IDAPA Approved Maximum Fee	Current Board Approved Fee (07-30-2008)
Thousand Springs Park Complex	N/A	
Billingsley Creek Unit		
Garden Center		$100.00/day
Indoor Riding Arena		$100.00/day
Farragut State Park	N/A	
Thimbleberry		$120.00/night
Buttonhook-Larch		$90.00/night
Buttonhook-Oceanspray		$120.00/night
Buttonhook-Saw-Whet		$60.00/night
Harriman State Park	N/A	
Dormitory and Dining Hall		$12.00/person /night
Fifteen (15) person minimum, forty (40) person maximum		
Two (2) night minimum stay on weekends and holidays		
Bunkhouse and Cookhouse		
Off-peak season		$120.00/night
Peak season		$150.00/night
(Thirteen [13] person maximum)		
Boy's House (Meeting Facility)		
(Maximum-capacity seventy (70) persons)		
Half day - Up to four (4) hours		$50.00/half day
Full day – eight (8) hours		$80.00/day
Ranch Manager's House – Minimum of four (4) persons		$190.00/night
Additional per person overnight charge		$12.00/night
(Maximum capacity – eight (8) persons)		
Two (2) night minimum stay on weekends and holidays		
Cattle Foreman's House – Minimum of four (4) persons		$140.00/night
Additional per person overnight charge		$12.00/night
(Maximum capacity – six (6) persons)		
Two (2) night minimum stay on weekends and holidays		
Scovell Center – Sleeping Facilities		
Individual Cabins – Off-peak season		$75.00/night
Individual Cabins – Peak season		$100.00/night
Ten (10) cabins sleep two (2) each		
Scovell Center – Conference/Retreat Facility		
Half day – Up to four (4) hours		$100.00/half-day
Rental per Day – Off-peak season		$120.00/day

PARK SPECIFIC FEES

	IDAPA Approved **Maximum Fee**	**Current Board Approved Fee (07-30-2008)**
Rental per Day – Peak Season		$150.00/day
Priest Lake State Park	N/A	
Lionhead Unit		
Group Camp (Includes kitchen and sleeping quarters)		$200.00/day
RV hookups (See fee schedule set by Subsection 250.01)		
Schaffer Cabin		$115.00/night
Dworshak State Park	N/A	
Three Meadows Group Camp		
Basic daily rate (includes lodge and two (2) sleeping cabins)		$275.00/night
Additional sleeping cabins		$60.00/night
Manager's Cabin		$60.00/night
Big Eddy Lodge	N/A	
Monday through Thursday (All year)		$75.00/day
Three (3) or more consecutive weekdays (All year)		$50.00/day
Primary-Season Rates: May 15 through Sept. 1		
Three (3) consecutive days (required) - Friday through Sunday		$350.00
Off-Season Rates: Sept. 1 through May 15		
Friday through Sunday		$150.00/day
Three (3) consecutive days - Friday through Sunday		$225.00
Heyburn State Park	N/A	
Rentals of State-Owned Cottages		
Cottages with full utilities		$115.00/night
Bear Lake State Park	N/A	
East Beach Campground		
Group Camp 100		$115.00/night
Group Camp 101		$115.00/night
Lake Cascade State Park	N/A	
Osprey Point Group Camp		$175.00/night

Small Taxes on Soft Drinks and Snack Foods to Promote Health

Michael F. Jacobson, PhD, and Kelly D. Brownell, PhD

ABSTRACT

Health officials often wish to sponsor nutrition and other health promotion programs but are hampered by lack of funding. One source of funding is suggested by the fact that 18 states and 1 major city levy special taxes on soft drinks, candy, chewing gum, or snack foods. The tax rates may be too small to affect sales, but in some jurisdictions, the revenues generated are substantial. Nationally, about $1 billion is raised annually from these taxes. The authors propose that state and local governments levy taxes on foods of low nutritional value and use the revenues to fund health promotion programs. (*Am J Public Health.* 2000;90:854–857)

Poor diet and physical inactivity in the United States are estimated to cause about 310000 to 580000 deaths annually due to cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes.[1] The economic cost of diet-related diseases has been conservatively estimated to be at least $71 billion annually (this estimate considers only coronary heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes).[2] Despite the great need, there are too few programs designed to promote healthier diets and physical activity. Even the largest nutrition education programs receive negligible support. For instance, the National Cancer Institute spends only about $1 million annually on the media component of its 5-A-Day campaign to encourage greater consumption of fruits and vegetables (G. Stables, National Cancer Institute, oral communication, April 16, 1999).

In contrast, the soft drink industry alone spends more than 600 times that much on advertising each year,[3] and the restaurant industry spends more than $3 billion annually on advertising.[4] Coke and Diet Coke are supported by $154 million; M&M candies, by $67 million; Lay's potato chips, by $56 million; and Kool-Aid beverages, by $19 million.[4]

To compensate for an unhealthy food environment, it has been suggested that foods high in calories, fat, or sugar be subjected to special taxes and that the cost of healthful foods, such as fruits and vegetables, be subsidized.[5–7] A steep tax would probably reduce the consumption of the taxed foods and could be used to generate funding to subsidize healthful foods. It is likely that such a subsidy would increase sales,[8] but there are mixed opinions on the feasibility and desirability of a steep tax.[9–12] In contrast, a *small* tax may be more politically feasible and still could generate significant revenues to support health measures.

Current State and Local Taxes

To ascertain current policies regarding taxes on less nutritious foods, we undertook a review of state tax laws. We identified 19 states and cities that levy such taxes. These taxes apply to soft drinks, candy, chewing gum, or snack foods (potato chips, pretzels, and others) (Table 1). Taxes may be levied at the wholesale or retail level and may be levied in terms of a fixed tax per volume of product or as a percentage of sales price. Likewise, in Canada, the federal government and 7 provinces apply a sales tax to soft drinks, candy, and snack foods but not to other foods.

Health experts might suggest that it would be more appropriate to tax foods on the basis of their content of saturated or trans fat,[13] because of the contribution of these fats to coronary heart disease, than to tax snack foods. However, legislative bodies find it more practical to tax well-recognized categories of food that play little useful role in nutrition. Soft drinks and snack foods typically add unneeded calories to the diet or replace nutritious foods, such as low-fat milk or fruit, without providing significant levels of nutrients.[14]

Even small taxes on widely consumed foods can raise substantial revenues. For instance, Arkansas's tax on soft drinks, about 2 cents per 12-oz (360-mL) can, generates $40 million per year. We estimate that California's 7.25% sales tax on soft drinks generates about $218 million in revenues annually. Nationally, special taxes on soft drinks, candy, and snacks generate about $1 billion per year (Table 1).

In most jurisdictions, snack-tax revenues go into the general treasury. In several instances, however, some or all of the revenues are earmarked for special purposes, although not for nutrition programs. For instance, West Virginia uses its soft-drink-tax revenues to support its medical, dental, and nursing schools, while Tennessee uses a portion of its soft-drink-tax revenues to help clean up highways. No jurisdiction uses revenues to subsidize the prices of healthful foods.

It is unknown whether sales taxes and other small taxes have a significant effect on sales and consumption. If the price elasticity of soft drinks were about the same as that estimated for cigarettes, about –0.4,[15] a 5% tax would result in a 2% decline in sales. It is possible that small declines in sales would be mitigated by price reductions absorbed

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by producers, wholesalers, and retailers. We are not aware of data comparing snack sales in states with and without snack taxes; it is possible that any effect of taxes would be masked by other differences, such as pricing, climate, and competitive forces.

The soft drink and snack food industries oppose and have campaigned against special taxes on their products. Partly for that reason, 12 cities, counties, or states have reduced or repealed their snack taxes in recent years (Table 2). For instance, in response to a Coca-Cola offer to build a bottling facility in Louisiana, legislators passed a law in 1993 that halved the soft drink tax beginning in 1995 and repealed the tax entirely contingent upon a bottler contracting to build a bottling facility worth $50 million or more.[16] Coca-

Table 1—Current Soft Drink and Snack Food Taxes

State or Locality	Year Enacted or Effective	Sales or Other Tax Specifically Applied; Representative Foods Taxed	Annual Income ($)	Use of Revenues/Notes
Arkansas	1992	$0.21 per gal of liquid soft drink; $2 per gal of soft drink syrups	40435799	Funds Medicaid; tax also approved on a ballot initiative in November 1993
California	1933	Sales tax (7.25%) on soft drinks	218000000 (estimate)	General funds
Chicago	1993	Distributors pay 3% on sales of containers, 9% on syrups	8218975	General funds
District of Columbia	1993	Sales tax (5.75%) on snack foods, soft drinks	4000000	General funds
Illinois	Mid-1980s	Full sales tax (6.25%) on soft drinks (other foods taxed at 1%–2%)	69000000	General funds
Indiana	1963	Sales tax (5%) on candy, gum, soft drinks, bottled water, dietary supplements	43000000	General funds
Kentucky	1972	Sales tax (6%) on candy, gum, soft drinks	34000000	General funds
Maine	1991	Sales tax (5.5%) on snack foods, soft drinks, carbonated water, ice cream, toaster pastries	14600000 (state's estimate of snack food items added under 1991 law)	General funds
Minnesota	1982	Sales tax (6.5%) on candy, carbonated drinks, fruit drinks (not containing any fruit juice), chewing gum, single-serve ice cream	45000000 (estimate)	General funds
Missouri	1962	$0.003 per gal of soft drinks produced	400000–500000	General funds (for health department inspections of bottling plants)
New Jersey	1966	Sales tax (6%) on candy, carbonated soft drinks	67000000	General funds
New York	1965	Sales tax (7.5%, includes average of 3.5% for local jurisdictions) on soft drinks, candy, confectionary, fruit drinks with less than 70% natural fruit juices	203000000 (state's estimate)	General funds
North Dakota	1985	Sales tax (5%) on candy, chewing gum, carbonated beverages, soft drinks with less than 70% fruit juice, powdered drink mixes	5000000 (estimate)	General funds
Rhode Island	1984	$0.04 per case (24 12-oz cans) of soft drinks, soda water, mineral water, beer paid by wholesaler	700000	General funds (but originally earmarked for environmental management, litter control)
Tennessee	1963	1.9% (increased in 1981 from 1.5%) of gross receipts from soft drinks and soft drink ingredients paid by manufacturers and bottlers	11600000	21% for highway litter control (beginning in 1981)
Texas	~1961	Sales tax (6.25%) on carbonated and noncarbonated packaged soft drink beverages, diluted juices, candy	160000000 (state's estimate for soft drinks only); 56000000 (estimate for candy)	General funds
Virginia	1977	Small excise tax on wholesalers and distributors based on total sales of carbonated soft drinks	93000	Litter control and recycling fund
Washington	1989	$1 per gal of syrup	9500000	Violence prevention and drug enforcement
West Virginia	1951	$0.01 per half-L of carbonated and noncarbonated soft drinks, fruit drinks, and chocolate milk and $0.80 per gal of syrups paid by manufacturers or wholesalers	12539000	West Virginia University medical, dental, and nursing schools

Note. Data were derived from state and local tax departments and from the *State Tax Handbook* (Chicago, Ill: Commerce Clearing House). Estimates were provided by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (except where otherwise noted) based on prorated national sales of soft drinks and candy.

Table 2—Repealed Soft Drink and Snack Food Taxes

State or Locality	Year Enacted	Year Repealed	Tax	Annual Income ($)	Use of Revenues/ Background of Repeal
California	1991	1992	Sales tax on snack foods	210 000 000 (state's estimate)	General funds; opponents said tax was hard to administer because of the unclear definition of which foods to tax; tax is now limited to soft drinks
Louisiana	1938	1997	2.50% (reduced to 1.25% in 1993) wholesale tax on bottled soft drinks and syrups	13 000 000	General funds; a 1993 law reduced tax from 2.50% to 1.25%, with full repeal if a bottler contracted to build a facility worth $50 million or more; Coca-Cola signed such a contract in 1997
Maryland	1992	1997	5% sales tax applied to snack foods sold anywhere	15 000 000 (state's estimate)	General funds; Frito-Lay threatened not to build a planned local plant if tax was not repealed
Baltimore City, Md	1989	1997	$0.02 per soft-drink container ≤16 oz; $0.04 per container >16 oz	6 000 000	General funds; bottlers, retailers, distributors, unions of employees in these industries, backed by soft drink companies, argued that tax causes loss of sales to suburban areas
Baltimore County, Md	1989	1991	$0.02 per soft drink container ≤16 oz.; $0.04 per container >16 oz	4,000,000	General funds; pressure from soft drink industry
Montgomery County, Md	1977	1995	$0.02 to $0.06 per container of soft drink, depending on size	3 500 000–7 700 000	General funds; opposition because beverage prices were higher than in surrounding jurisdictions
Mississippi	1969	1992	5% (reduced to 3% in 1985) of wholesale value of soft drinks, artificial fruit drinks, bottled teas	8 765 000	Food and beverage industry lobbying
New York	1990	1998	$0.02 per container (reduced to $0.01 in 1995) of carbonated soft drinks and waters	50 000 000–54 000 000	Enacted to fund environmental bonds; went to general funds because bonds were not approved; strong soft drink lobby helped end the tax
North Carolina	1969	1999	$0.01 per bottle; $1 per gal of syrup, milk shake mixes, powdered drink bases	40 000 000	General funds; soft drink bottlers association lobbied for repeal
Ohio	1993	1994	$0.008 per oz carbonated beverages; $0.64 per gal of syrup	59 800 000	General funds; soft drink industry got constitutional amendment to repeal the soft drink tax on the ballot and spent about $7 million in advertising campaign to defeat the tax
South Carolina	1925	2001	$0.01 per 12-oz container; $0.95 per gal syrup	26 600 000	General funds; soft drink/bottling industry lobbying
Washington	1989	1994	$0.01 per 12-oz can	14 000 000	Violence prevention and drug enforcement; defeated in complex, poorly understood ballot initiative; bottlers probably played a part

Note. Data were derived from state and local tax departments and from the *State Tax Handbook* (Chicago, Ill: Commerce Clearing House).

Cola signed such a contract in 1997.[17] The plant was projected to generate several hundred new jobs and $3 million annually in new taxes, although Louisiana loses about $15 million annually in revenues from soft drink taxes. Similarly, in the mid-1990s in Maryland, Frito-Lay used "blunt threats" not to build a manufacturing and distribution center in Harford County to persuade the state to repeal its snack tax, which had generated $15 million in revenues annually.[18]

Another problem with some taxes has been the complexity of determining which foods fall under a tax. For example, are drinks that contain 40% fruit juice "soft drinks"? Is a 4-oz package of crackers a "snack"? These are valid but not insurmountable concerns, as many jurisdictions have discovered. The complexities argue for simple, clear taxes.

Use of Revenues to Fund Nutrition and Physical Activity Programs

We estimate that a national tax of 1 cent per 12-oz soft drink would generate about $1.5 billion annually. Similarly, taxes of 1 cent per pound of candy, chips, and other snack foods, or fats and oils, would raise about $70 million, $54 million, and $190 million, respectively. Because such small taxes are unlikely to have a significant effect on the price or consumption of food, they probably would not be strongly opposed by consumers.

A nationally representative opinion poll revealed that 1-cent taxes per pound of soft drinks, chips, and butter, with the revenues used to fund health education programs, were supported by about 45% of adults surveyed.[19] This appears to be remarkably great support for a tax that would affect most adults and that has not been discussed in the media. An alternative, as practiced by several jurisdictions, is to apply sales taxes, which are not applied to most foods, to snack foods or soft drinks.

Snack taxes could fund vitally needed health promotion programs. For example, a campaign in Clarksburg, WVa, encouraged consumers to switch from higher fat to lower fat milk to reduce intakes of saturated fat. After the 7-week campaign, the market share of 1% or fat-free milk increased from 18% to 41%.[20] Most of that change was sustained for at least 1 year. The cost of the campaign, which used paid television and radio messages, was only 22 cents per resident.[21]

A campaign reaching about 200000 people would cost about the same as 1 coronary-bypass operation. With adequate funding, such as that from snack taxes (or general revenues), similar campaigns could be mounted nationally and on a variety of diet/exercise issues. Once a sufficient number of such health promotion campaigns have been conducted, health economists can evaluate their cost-effectiveness. It also should be possible to measure the effectiveness of investing in increased physical education in schools, more bicycle paths and recreation centers, and other approaches to encouraging physical activity.

Small taxes on soft drinks, candy, gum, and snack foods are politically feasible and, when revenues are applied to health programs, are likely to be supported by many consumers. We suggest that public health professionals consider recommending snack taxes as a means of funding healthy eating and physical activity programs. Such programs could result in better health and lower health care costs.

Contributors

M. F. Jacobson did most of the research for this paper. M. F. Jacobson and K. D. Brownell cowrote the paper.

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