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Statement of Juan Candelaria,
State Representative for 95th Assembly District
For the Committee on Children
February 13, 2015
In support of

HB-5461, AN ACT IMPOSING A TAX ON SUGARY SOFT DRINKS AND CANDIES.

Good Afternoon, Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, and Honorable members of the Committee on Children. As the proponent of **H.B. 5461, *An Act Imposing a Tax on Sugary Soft Drink and Candies***, I would like to express my strong support and urge passage of this bill.

Our nation is in the core of a childhood obesity crisis, nearly 32 percent of kids in America are overweight and, of those 12.7 million are obese. Childhood obesity is caused by many things, but sugar-sweetened beverages and candy play a major role in the obesity epidemic. The consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages has increased 500 percent in the past 50 years, and today they are the single largest source of added sugar for kids, particularly among low-income communities and communities of color. Sugar-sweetened beverages are the leading source of added sugar in the American diet and are associated with increased risk of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, dental carries, osteoporosis and obesity.¹ In fact, today children drink more sugar-sweetened beverages than milk.

Today 21 percent of all healthcare costs are because of obesity-related conditions.² And with nearly 32 percent of children in America overweight or obese, those costs do not seem like they will be lowered anytime soon. If we implement a Sugar-Sweetened Beverage tax of 1 cent per ounce on all sweetened beverages, it would result in an annualized revenue gain of **186.4 million and 3.2 million for candy in FY 16.**³ The revenue generated by the tax can support programs related to health, nutrition and obesity prevention specifically in low-income and colored communities.

¹ Reedy J Krebs-Smith SM. Dietary Sources of energy, solids fats, and Added sugars among children and adolescents in the United States. J AM Diet Assoc. 2010; f 110 (10):1477-1484. Malik VS. Schulze MB, Hu FB. Intake of Sugar-Sweetened beverages and weight gain: a systematic review Am J Clin Nutr. 2006;84(2):274-288

² Cawley J and Meyerhoefer C. The medical care cost of obesity: an instrumental variables approach: J Health Econ 31.1 (2012): 219-230.

³ Evelyn Arnold, OFA – January 8, 2015

There are numerous studies showing that a price increase for sugar-sweetened beverages can dramatically reduce consumption. In the last 12 years that I have proudly served in this legislature, I have seen increases in alcohol and cigarette taxes with the goal of reducing consumption and promoting a healthier living. This is no different; a 2011 Study of the potential impact of SSB taxes in Illinois estimated that a penny per ounce excise tax would reduce: the number of obese youth by 9.3%, and obese adults by 5.2%; diabetes incidence by more than 3400 cases; diabetes-related health care costs by \$20.7 million and obesity-related health by \$ 150.8 million.⁴

Although, the concept of taxing sugar-sweetened beverages and candy may not be appealing to the consumer, the bottom line is that evidence based research has proven the impact of sugar consumption and the adverse health related implications. Throughout history, government has exercised the role as protector of Public Health, such as tobacco taxes, fluoridated water, and vaccinations;⁵ Obesity has become a national health crisis that we must act upon.

I look forward to a favorable consideration from the committee.

Thank you Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and committee members for the opportunity to present testimony.

Respectfully submitted,



Juan Candelaria
State Representative
95th Assembly District

⁴ Chaloupka FJ, Wang YC, Powell LM, Andreyeta T, Chriqui JF, RimkusLM. Estimating the potential impact of sugar-sweetened and Cook County Department of Public Health, 2011.

⁵ Rudd Report SSB Taxes