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## **Low Income and Communities of Color Developed a Different Policy Approach to Curbing Sweetened Beverage Over consumption**

*Community Health Councils' Health Impact Assessment exposes previously unstudied factors that when addressed have the potential for legislative success in reducing sugar sweetened beverage over consumption and resulting obesity*

*Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup> ▪ Community Health Councils ▪ 3731 Stocker Street, Suite 201 ▪ Los Angeles 90008*

**LOS ANGELES, CA** — The California Legislator has tried unsuccessfully for at least three years to pass a bill that would impose a distributor tax or fee on beverages with added sugar. The bill's intent was to simultaneously cause a decline in consumption as one strategy to combat obesity and contribute to a fund to support obesity fighting programs. Community Health Councils (CHC) along with a cross-sector steering committee of community-based organizations, residents, university faculty and public health advocates led a health impact assessment (HIA) project to study the impact of the proposal on low-income, and communities of color with young children across four Los Angeles regions and three racial groups— African-American, Latino, and Southeast Asian.

Results from the 2011 LA County Department of Public Health Key Indicators of Health survey revealed that all the target areas were well above the LA County average (38.3%) of children who consumed at least one soda or sweetened drink a day. South LA had the highest percentage (51.8%) and Long Beach/Wilmington was second highest (45.4%) followed by East/Central LA (40.9%) and Pacoima (39.7%).

The HIA released today, *Assessing California's Sweetened Beverage Tax Proposal: A Health Impact Assessment* uncovered factors that affect consumption decisions by these populations never before considered in previous studies. Among the factors are: (1) Sugar addiction; (2) Access to alternative healthier beverages; (3) The substitution effect.

*“Disclosing these factors that affect sweetened beverage over consumption by low-income and communities of color, we trust will inform future legislative proposals and the public health field”* stated, Community Health Councils' Veronica Flores.

Results of the study included such alternative policy solutions as:

- (1) Making healthier drinks more accessible to discourage unhealthy substitution;
- (2) Ensure collected revenues go to communities of need;
- (3) Establish targeted and culturally relevant interventions that address targeted marketing and other study identified factors that affect over consumption.

The report is available online at [CHC's website](#).

*Community Health Councils (CHC) is a non-profit, community-based health education and policy organization. Established in 1992, our mission is to promote social justice and achieve health equity in community and environmental resources for underserved populations.*

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<sup>1</sup> Los Angeles County Health Survey, LACHS 2011 Survey, Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.