



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

檳城消費人協會 பிளாங்கு பயனீட்டாளர் சங்கம்

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Press Statement/Letter to Editor

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Channel revenue from soda tax towards Health Promotion

Consumers Association of Penang fully supports the Government's consideration of a soda tax as a deterrent to consumption of sweetened drinks and beverages to promote healthy lifestyle. However to be consistent in this direction the price of sugar should not be lowered and the sugar subsidy should not be reinstated. Soda tax should be implemented on all forms of sweetened beverages and drinks.

The revenue from the soda tax should be channelled towards health promotion to educate consumers on healthy living. When the soda tax was announced in the UK, the government committed to dedicate revenues from the soda tax to fund primary school physical education and sports to encourage physical activity. In Mexico, the soda tax was accompanied by a very effective public health education campaign. This effort led to a 5.5% drop in sugary-drink purchases in the first year after the tax was introduced and 9.7% decline in the second year.

There is absolutely no doubt that sugar is the most harmful additive in food. It is the one ingredient that has been linked to a host of diseases. According to the International Diabetes Federation as the global per capita consumption of sugar increased over the years, the global prevalence of diabetes also increased progressively. Recent studies indicate that sugar also contributes to heart disease, stroke and some cancers.

Taxation together with aggressive health promotion will lead to better health outcome for Malaysians.

S.M. MOHAMED IDRIS

President

Consumers Association of Penang