2016-10-26

Hon. Charles Sousa
Minister of Finance
Government of Ontario
Hepburn Block, 10th Floor
80 Grosvenor St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

Dear Minister Sousa:

**RE: Provincial taxation of sugar-sweetened beverages**

At its meeting on 2016-10-26, the Kingston, Frontenac, and Lennox & Addington Board of Health passed the following motion:

THAT the KFL&A Board of Health urge the provincial government to implement taxation of sugar-sweetened beverages at 20 percent or greater and to direct the monies collected through this tax to province-wide efforts to promote healthy eating and prevent obesity; and,

THAT this correspondence be sent to:

1. Honourable Charles Sousa, Provincial Minister of Finance
2. Honourable Dr. Eric Hoskins, Provincial Minister of Health and Long-term Care
3. Honourable Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario

The average Canadian's sugar consumption is above the maximum recommended by the World Health Organization and is likely an important contributor to the current rate of obesity in this country and in this province. Sugar-sweetened beverages, including soft drinks, energy drinks, and sweetened milk, coffee and tea, account for a large source of sugar in the Canadian diet. In fact, adolescents consume seven to eight percent of their daily caloric intake from sugar-sweetened beverages. Evidence suggests that children with high intake of SSBs are 55 percent more likely to be obese or overweight when compared to those with low intake of SSBs. There is emerging evidence that the taxation of SSBs will lead to decreased purchasing, and hence, consumption of SSBs.

The KFL&A Board of Health recognizes that the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care is working to create environments that are supportive of healthy eating through the *Healthy Menu Choices Act* and the implementation of the Healthy Kids Community Challenge in communities throughout Ontario. However, the rates of obesity remain high, and pose risks to the health of children and adults alike.
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The KFL&A Board of Health urges the Provincial Government to implement taxation on sugar-sweetened beverages to protect and to promote the health of all Ontarians, and to complement the current provincial initiatives on healthy eating.

Yours truly,

Charles Simonds, Chair
KFL&A Board of Health

Copy to: Board of Health members
Hon. E. Hoskins, Provincial Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Hon. K. Wynne, Premier, Province of Ontario
M. Gerretsen, MP, Kingston and the Islands
S. Kiwala, MPP, Kingston and the Islands
R. Hillier, MPP, Lanark, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington
Boards of Health, Local Public Health Agencies