



What Would a Soda Tax Mean for Missouri?

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[Twenty two states have already enacted selective taxes on soda](#) . In two of these states, Virginia and Illinois, this tax is in addition to the general food tax.

Missouri doesn't have a soda tax yet. We Missourians are fortunate to enjoy some of the most permissive sin tax policies, compared to other states. For example, Missouri has the second lowest state cigarette tax — it's \$0.17 per pack, compared to a national average of \$1.30. Additionally, Missouri is tied with my home state, Wisconsin, for the second-lowest state beer tax — \$0.06 per gallon, compared to to a national average of \$0.28.

According to this [revenue calculator for soft drink taxes](#) from the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity at Yale University, if Missouri slapped a \$0.01 tax on sugar-sweetened beverages, the state would generate more than \$285 million in 2010 alone. If this \$0.01 tax were expanded to include diet beverages, this number would balloon to more than \$460 million.

How high does the tax have to rise in order for consumers to be responsive (i.e., drink less soda)? Is the government legitimately trying to change consumers' behavior, or is it simply

trying to raise extra tax revenue?

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[2] <http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparemaptable.jsp?ind=696&cat=1&sub=9&yr=63&typ=2&rgnhl=27>

[3] <http://www.yaleruddcenter.org/sodatax.aspx>

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