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NEWS >>

TEAMSTERS LOCAL 727 OPPOSES JOB-KILLING BEVERAGE TAX

Cook County Teamster Members Urged to Join Fight Against Regressive Tax

Teamsters Local 727 is calling all members to oppose a beverage tax recently proposed by Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle. In a misguided attempt to close Cook County's budget gap, Preckwinkle wants a soda tax which would add more as much as 50 percent to a case of soda.

The cent-per-ounce tax would be enforced on soda, lemonade, sports drinks and even diet drinks. It would add 72 cents to a six pack of soda or 68 cents to a two-liter bottle. Some Cook County politicians mistakenly believe the extra revenue would help close the Illinois budget gap. When Berkeley, California enacted an identical beverage tax in 2014, soft drink consumption plummeted by 20 percent in the first year.

The new tax proposal is an illogical and unsustainable solution to the Cook County budget crisis. As consumption reduces, so does the generated income. At best the tax would drive Cook County consumers to neighboring counties to buy soda.

"This tax is specifically designed to reduce consumption and as a result will mean the loss of good middle class jobs," said John Coli, Jr., President of Teamsters Local 727. "We will not stand idly by while jobs are destroyed by an irresponsible tax. It is imperative that we all stand for the welfare of our hard-working brothers and sisters at Coca-Cola, Home Juice, Pepsi and American Beverage Company and fight against this detrimental tax."

More than 2,500 people are directly employed by the beverage industry in Cook County—which is more than 25 percent of the 9,400 men and women employed statewide by the industry. Additionally, there are over 3,000 vendors and suppliers in Cook County whose businesses would be impacted by dip in beverage sales.

Cook County Commissioner Richard Boykin introduced a rideshare surcharge that would charge \$0.50 per ride for all rides originating in or ending in cook county. The union expects the surcharge would generate close to \$80 million per year.

Cook County Teamsters urge you to please call your county commissioner to say the soda tax is bad for Cook County and that we support an alternative surcharge on Rideshare.

City residents can look up their commissioners at: <http://m.chicagoelections.com/en/your-voter-information.html>

Suburban cook residents can look up their commissioners at: <http://www.cookcountyclerk.com/elections/deo/Pages/electedofficiallist.aspx?qtype=2&hnum=1750&sname=Julian&zip=60622>

Teamsters Local 727 is an affiliate of Teamsters Joint Council 25, America's premier labor union for Chicago, Illinois and northwest Indiana.