

The federal government and the states have taxed tobacco products for decades to discourage usage, as well as to defray the additional healthcare costs caused by smoking. This tax policy is widely accepted and thought to make good common sense.

I would like to take this concept to the next level. My proposal is based on the fact that poor food choices have a greater negative economic impact on our country than that of tobacco. In recent years the federal government and the states have produced many public awareness programs to inform the public of the harmful effects of many of fatty, non-nutritious, processed foods in the hope that a lower consumption of unhealthy food will impact on the unsustainable rise in healthcare costs. My guess is it is working to a certain extent, but I believe we can have perhaps a hundred fold greater impact by taxing food.

My suggestion is very simple and could be easily implemented. The prevailing state tax in each state would now apply to all food purchases with an exception for dry beans, dry grains, fruit and vegetables (both fresh and frozen). The savings to our country in terms of less bypass surgeries, less chemotherapy, less drug prescriptions would turn out to be a mega windfall to our economy.

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