

From: [REDACTED]
To: [commissionstreamlining](#)
Subject: Keep the Sugary Drink Tax Commission separate!
Date: Wednesday, October 8, 2025 5:00:13 PM

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Dear Commission Streamlining Task Force:

I write to you today as an individual, who happens to be a commissioner on the City of Berkeley's Sugar Sweetened Beverage Product Panel of Experts (SSBPPE), to urge you not to merge or eliminate San Francisco's Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee (SDDTAC).

Similar to the SDDTAC, Berkeley's SSBPPE is made up of residents who work in community health, dental health, medicine, chronic disease prevention, nutrition research, policy experts and city health staff. Together, we safeguard the sugary drink revenues by producing recommendations on how to spend the funds in effective and impactful ways that directly address the harms of sugary drink consumption. We use our combined, specialized expertise in every meeting and do additional work outside of meetings, in order to make responsible decisions that are directly related to the goals of the sugary drink tax. I understand that the SDDTAC operates similarly -- as such, I feel confident that the work required could not be easily carried out by another commission. It would be a disservice to voters who passed the SDDT to eliminate the SDDTAC or combine it with another commission. Commissioners, especially those who serve on the SDDTAC, are not interchangeable.

In Berkeley, we have been able to demonstrate that the SSBPPE is able to act independently and make recommendations to city council to fund community health programs through a grant-making process. This responsible reinvestment of tax dollars back into the community was instrumental to why voters in Berkeley overwhelmingly approved to remove the sunset clause of the Berkeley soda tax, making it a permanent tax measure. I hope to see the same happen in San Francisco and sincerely believe that a key factor is continuing to support the SDDTAC and keep this commission independent. Weakening or diluting the strength of the SDDTAC would be disingenuous to voters and weaken the ability to make the tax permanent. Now, more than ever, our cities in the Bay Area need to be role models of effective and transparent democratic governance and stewardship of public funds.

I strongly oppose eliminating the SDDTAC, or merging it with another commission.
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Janice Kao