

Peace Chkwudi-Esonwune  
Commissioner, Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Product Panel of Experts  
City of Berkeley, California  
[REDACTED]  
Berkeley, CA 94710

October 8, 2025

Dear San Francisco Commission Streamlining Task Force Members,

I write as an individual and as a Commissioner serving on the City of Berkeley's Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Product Panel of Experts (SSBPPE) to express my strong opposition to merging or eliminating San Francisco's Sugary Drinks Distributor Tax Advisory Committee (SDDTAC).

My perspective is shaped both by Berkeley's decade-long experience implementing the nation's first sugary drink tax and by our shared commitment to advancing public health and health equity. The SSBPPE has witnessed firsthand how a well-structured, independent advisory body can help translate tax revenues into measurable community impact. Through strategic partnerships with local organizations, we've supported programs that expand access to healthy food, strengthen nutrition education in schools, and empower families in neighborhoods disproportionately affected by diet-related diseases.

These gains are not theoretical—they are tangible outcomes rooted in community engagement, evidence-based decision-making, and accountability to voters. The integrity and success of Berkeley's program stem from the Commission's independence and deep connection to the communities we serve. Removing or merging San Francisco's SDDTAC risks eroding that trust and dismantling a proven structure that effectively channels resources toward preventing obesity, diabetes, and related chronic conditions.

The SDDTAC's work mirrors the purpose and spirit of Berkeley's initiative—serving as a bridge between evidence, policy, and lived experience. To dilute or eliminate this body would not only weaken community voice but also hinder San Francisco's capacity to sustain meaningful progress in public health equity.

For these reasons, I urge you to preserve the independence of the SDDTAC. Doing so will affirm the City's continued commitment to transparency, collaboration, and health justice.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,  
Peace Chkwudi-Esonwune  
Commissioner, Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Product Panel of Experts  
City of Berkeley, California