

## Rebuttal to Argument for Measure Z

There could not be a worse time to burden Santa Cruz working families and local businesses with a new beverage tax. Measure Z will raise prices dramatically, require an expensive legal battle to defend, and won't accomplish what supporters say it will.

**Despite what supporters say, the tax money can be spent on anything city authorities choose.** The measure itself concludes: "for general governmental use." In Oakland, the majority of beverage tax revenue went to city administration. Most importantly, UC Davis researchers said beverage taxes in California have not accomplished significant health outcomes.

This tax also violates a state law that prohibits local taxes on groceries. Our Mayor said this measure will cost the city "huge amounts of money to defend." **Our tax dollars should be used for essential city services like firefighting, parks and housing – not on lawyers for an expensive legal battle.**

A 2-cent per ounce tax on beverages adds up fast. Cases of many everyday beverages — from iced tea to kombucha to soft drinks – could end up costing much more. This is on top of the recent hike in the Santa Cruz sales tax amid an already record high cost of living that hurts working families and college students hardest.

We share in the goals of advancing public health, but **a regressive tax is not the answer** since it only hurts working families and small businesses.

**Vote NO on Measure Z.**

Rolando Loera, Small Business Owner

Constance A. Hutchinson, Owner of Jack's Hamburgers

Javier Corona, Owner of Restaurante Los Pinos

Karukinattil Saji Stephen, Owner of Mission Liquors

Kathleen Peppard, Santa Cruz Resident