



e.Forum Posit

Two Related Posit: "SSVMS/CMA should support legislation to: (1) Limit transfats and carbohydrates in school lunches and vending machines; (2) Ban smoking in all public entertainment, whether live, or as portrayed on TV and in movies."

WITHIN THE ANNUAL TSUNAMI of legislation are laws and regulations banning harmful behavior, or choices. Yet, how legislation can affect health is complex; and is often subject to the "law of unintended consequences."

It is fascinating, if depressing, to observe the interaction of politics and profits. Compare, for example, the prevalence of smoking in movies and on TV with that among the general public. Is there a disparity because many special interests profit from smoking, including those of us who want to tax the addiction to benefit providers of medical care? On the other hand, is it wise to tolerate exposure of children to harmful food and behavior?

Approximately 80 percent of respondents agreed with posit one on transfats and carbohydrates. An ill-defined majority disagreed with posit two on smoking - "ill-defined" because of disconnects between some opinions and the associated comment. Example: disapproval for legal reasons but approval for motives of health; or approval in general but a feeling the idea was politically impractical. More than 36 percent agreed with both posits, but only 12 libertarians, or 7 percent, disapproved of both. Commentary was prolific. "In a free-enterprise system any 'non-contracted' physician has a fundamental right to directly bill patients when insurance does not pay that physician's usual and customary charge."

"I certainly agree with limiting carbohydrates in school lunches/vending machines, but your wording won't work: "sugars" in labelings strictly means sucrose or glucose and yet we all know from our chemistry training that all carbohydrates are sugars, too. So, limiting just "carbohydrates" would allow still massive sucrose. The labeling laws need to be changed to the chemically and biochemically correct fact of all carbs = sugars, and separately break down the types of chemical sugars, sucrose, glucose, fructose, maltose, refined corn starch, wheat starches, hydroxypropylated corn starch, cyclodextrins, etc.

As a scary note, hydroxypropylated corn starch is the end result of raw corn treated with sulfur dioxide to soften it, then soaked in 1% hypochlorite (bleach, i.e., Chlorox) at boiling temperatures, then reacted pound for pound with propylene oxide or chlorohydrin - both classic mutagens, carcinogens and alkylating agents - to get your final product. Check it out at in the Corn Growers handbook. A more comprehensive source for what is allowed is the Code of Federal Regulations, see and submit search terms such as [modified corn starch] to see endless lists of chemicals allowed in food, generally regarded as safe (GRAS)" - Colin Paul Spears

"Frankly, as a libertarian, I find the current trend toward making physicians into church ladies repulsive. Nanny medicine trivializes the profession and further marginalizes physicians. We should be a resource for the entire population not just the asexual vegan prunes that make up the vocal minority that drives policy. Being a libertarian is becoming a lonely position. We are being over run by food, cigarette, weight (you name it) police. Does any one mind their own business anymore? Freedom of speech, what an elegant comment that apparently is of little value to the church ladies among us. " - David Gibson

"I think the corporate predators in the tobacco industry should be stopped from all advertising. The industry should be nationalized and run as a government non-profit. Each brand should be given a number, not a name. The executives of these corporations should face criminal charges and asset forfeiture for years of deadly pathological lying to the public." - John J McCarthy

"Trans-fat is not a foodstuff, rather it is an industrial invention that is cheap and convenient for those who make and sell food. It does not benefit the consumer, and is in fact harmful. Armed with this knowledge, who would want to raise their children and grandchildren on it?" - A Czerwinski

"There is far too much incursion of "junk food" into school settings. The schools should be supporting a healthy lifestyle and food choices for students. This is a major public health issue and should be a "no brainer" for schools! (However, regarding smoking, the restrictions of the posit) would be the same as a ban on violence, sex, cursing, or any other "artistic expression," and in my opinion would be unconstitutional. " - Matthew van der Veen

"I would love to see this, but doubt that it would pass constitutional muster." - Francisco Prieto

"Responsible adults must not promote poor nutrition for children. However, responsible legislators could promote responsible behavior WITHOUT their excess of meddlesome and often counterproductive legislation." - L Welter

"It is said that all we need to know in life are taught in the first years of education. What happened to the food groups? Why all this micro management of diet now? Smoke is an irritant to say the least. So are other aromatic inhaled agents such as perfumes. With the growing pollution around the world and increasing #s of hyper-reactive bronchial and other respiratory illnesses afflicted individuals, it is only medically appropriate that this be done for the better health of the citizenry! In the movies and TV, I would prefer one of the characters objecting to the smoking that another actor does and actually portray the evils of smoking and empower the viewers to actually request someone to stop, take it outside or do it at another time where requester would not present or show the whole cast object to it. Wouldn't that be splendid?" - Elisabeth Mathew

"(Smoking) This is a more difficult issue, because it touches on the debate about freedom of speech, artistic license, etc. I think, however, a case can be made for prohibiting smoking in entertainment shows or venues that are rated PG-13 or lower, since that involves children.?" - Ku-Liang Yu

"(While agreeing on the smoking posit, re Trans Fat,) This does nothing to get at the root of the problem and wastes a bunch of money on tran-fat police. It also send the message that fat is ok as long as it is not trans." - Mark Ewens

"(Trans Fats use) is contributing to childhood obesity and diabetes. I don't know a more harmful substance to mankind than smoking. " - Lee Vong

"Too "nanny state"--adults can smoke if they want." - Steve Dorfman

"Several times I have gone to my kid's schools (three different school districts over the years) at lunch time and seen what is offered by the cafeteria. As a pediatrician I would consider it a child neglect if I make my kids eat the school lunches day after day. So, over the last 10 years I've been preparing my kids lunches every school day with joy and wonder they will have to do the same thing for their children. However, it is also difficult to have the students choose the right food to eat from the school cafeteria when at home they don't and they are not accustomed to it." - Tezcan Kamer

"i do not feel strongly about this, but i question if this within the mission of svms./cma. I think it would be great to have no smoking in public entertainment, but i do not think that is the mission of ssvms or cma. While such support could be supported as in the interest of health of the population, it smacks of culture control and limitation of freedom of

expression and individual choice." - Nancy Gilbert

"Limiting trans-fats is OK. Limiting all carbohydrates is not. There are many healthy foods that contain carbohydrates, including fruit, vegetables, dairy and whole grains. Without carbs, the snacks would be fat and protein." - Ann Gerhardt

"Nutrition education should be taught and reinforced in the school and at home. This does not mean restricting choice. School lunches should be exemplary in its constitution and therefore there should be no question as to its healthiness. Vending machines on the other hand are private business enterprises and like television, no one is forced to use it." - Jose Ma C Leuterio

"Don't we already disallow cigarettes and alcohol in such venues? Here, simply "limiting" such harmful products is the least we can do. Limits are better than complete "bans". We are already limited in how much alcohol consumption can be viewed in public entertainment. If one wishes a true ban, then one ought to also accept such a ban on alcohol consumption in public entertainment. It is a hypocrisy that we have such different standards for alcohol and for tobacco in our society." - Khasimuddin, Syed Ameen

"The real issue is educating families about proper nutrition and exercise and providing nutritional education and promoting fitness to children at a young age. Cigarette smoking is still the most frequent and serious we as physicians have to deal with." - James Alan Margolis

"Bring back apple and orange machines." - Charles Maas

"I agree that smoking should be limited in public entertainment, but I don't think a ban is appropriate." - Kirk Mulgrew

"Each new law results in a greater bureaucracy as new commissions to enforce new restrictions. This applies to both of these proposals. We already have too many restrictions on how we run our lives." - Peter Carruth

"Childhood obesity must be addressed aggressively!" - Roseanne Pevec

"This depends on the portrayal of smoking; whether it's portrayed negatively or positively" - Pearl Ma

"To have these foods so readily available to children at school is hurting our kids. In contrast to 20-30 years ago, many of our neighborhoods aren't safe enough to let our kids play unsupervised. It is really hard for kids to get enough active play time in to work off these foods. The marketing done by Frito Lay and other snack food makers is no better than Joe Camel." - Sarita Salzberg

"Trans-fats, yes. Simple, highly-processed carbohydrates such as high-fructose corn syrup and other sugars found in products such as soda, yes." - Mathew Fentress, MS3

"I believe this is important because we are dealing with a "captive audience" in terms of the fact that most kids do not have the option to leave school if they wanted to make better health choices; they will eat what is convenient and what is available. Additionally, as even adults have a hard time figuring out what is "healthy" because there is so much misinformation out there from the Food industry, then we should be extra mindful of the messages children are given as to what is and how much of a serving constitutes a healthy diet

Whereas I understand that there is concern that smoking might be glamorized for children, an approach that bans everything, such as smoking, that might be deemed offensive in order to "protect the children" is not useful in creating meaningful dialogue about media influences, the fantasy world of TV and Movies and the importance of making personal decisions about one's health and behavior." - Teresa Flores, MS3

"To be really worthwhile, the restriction would have to include saturated fats as well as

trans-fats. I agree (re smoking) except it is not realistic to try to ban smoking on TV and movies." - E.T. Rulison

"Studies have shown that young teens are influenced by what they see in the various entertainments. Banning smoking in entertainments can have positive long term effects." - J Rabinovitz

"Simple carbohydrates should be limited (sugar, corn syrup), but complex carbohydrates should not." - William Lewis

I am anti-smoking, but this proposal sounds totalitarian. What about art and freedom of expression?" - Steven Burrall

"To be consistent, you should ban portrayal of ALL unhealthy, questionable, and/or illegal activities. What would happen to art, drama, film and the like then?" - Abraham Thomas (disagreeing with posit 2)

"Ban (smoking) on TV and movies for those under 18. (It is) probably a freedom of speech issue for over 18 movies particularly produced in other countries and replaying old movies like Casablanca... Not sure what public entertainment is-does that include politics?... I'm trying to picture banning at NASCAR races and burning man events, etc. too" - W Hudson

"(Smoking) How are we going to do this and not ban old movies. This is dealing with this at the wrong end and constitutes a form of censorship." - Gregory Joy

"Parents need to pack lunches for their children." - Chuck Espy

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