

Submitter: Rachel Freed

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3940

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 3940, which proposes to place a surcharge on the sales of beverage containers to fund wildfire prevention and response efforts. While I fully support initiatives aimed at addressing the wildfire crisis, I believe that this approach is misguided and could have several negative consequences for consumers and businesses alike.

First and foremost, imposing a surcharge on beverage containers disproportionately affects low- and middle-income families. Such a fee on everyday purchases will place an additional financial burden on those who may already be struggling to make ends meet. Rather than promoting environmental responsibility, this measure risks alienating consumers and could lead to decreased sales for local businesses that rely on beverage sales.

Additionally, the proposed surcharge does not guarantee that the funds will be effectively allocated to wildfire prevention and response efforts. Without clear accountability and transparency in how the collected funds will be used, there is a risk that this surcharge could become just another tax without delivering meaningful results in wildfire management.

Moreover, this legislation does not address the root causes of wildfires or promote comprehensive strategies that prioritize long-term solutions. Effective wildfire prevention requires a multifaceted approach, including better land management practices, improved infrastructure, and increased funding for fire prevention programs. Relying on a surcharge on beverage containers fails to tackle these underlying issues and may divert attention away from more effective strategies.

In conclusion, while the goal of funding wildfire prevention and response is commendable, the approach outlined in HB 3940 is flawed. I urge you to oppose this legislation and consider alternative methods that do not place an undue burden on consumers and that focus on comprehensive, long-term solutions to the wildfire crisis.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.