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## **New Videos Highlight Disconnect Between Pro-Beverage Tax Commissioners and their Constituents Calling for the Tax's Repeal**

**(CHICAGO - September 28, 2017)** - Cook County commissioners have a choice when it comes to the future of the county's unfair, over-reaching and vastly unpopular beverage tax: they can stand with Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle and New York City billionaire Michael Bloomberg - or they can stand with the nearly [90% of county residents who oppose the tax and want to see it repealed](#).

Four new online videos released today by the Can the Tax Coalition highlight broad-based opposition to Cook County's beverage tax in the districts of four county commissioners who continue to express their support for the unfair and over-reaching tax.

The videos feature calls for the tax to be repealed from residents, business owners and local groups and organizations in the districts of **Cook County Commissioners Larry Suffredin, Jesus "Chuy" Garcia, Stanley Moore and Deborah Sims - all who voted for the tax**. The overwhelming in-district opposition to the tax is then juxtaposed with statements from the four commissioners expressing their continued support for the deeply flawed and unpopular tax. Following are links to the videos:

- "Come Back" Commissioner Larry Suffredin: <https://youtu.be/diWKA2w5tPg>
- "Stand with the Residents" Commissioner Jesus "Chuy" Garcia: <https://youtu.be/JIVjgp53cvM>
- "It's not too late" Commissioner Stanley Moore: [https://youtu.be/0\\_Px1WQrYRU](https://youtu.be/0_Px1WQrYRU)
- "Really?" Commissioner Deborah Sims: <https://youtu.be/MNDRJeLKiQc>

The videos are part of the Can the Tax coalition's ongoing efforts to educate Cook County elected officials, residents and businesses about the devastating impact the beverage tax is having on county residents and businesses - and where their commissioner stands on the tax's repeal.

The videos can be found on the Can the Tax [YouTube](#) page and will be featured on social media over the next two weeks.



Following are select quotes from the videos:

From [“Come Back” Commissioner Larry Suffredin](#)

- **Bill Morton, president of the Rogers Park Chamber of Commerce:** “Cook County residents aren’t just suffering, they’re expressing complete outrage.”
- **George Alpogianis, owner of Kappy’s Restaurant in Morton Grove and trustee, Village of Niles:** “Larry, I’m calling upon you to repeal your vote, to come back and say this was wrong for our citizens, wrong for our business community and wrong for the county in general.”

From [“Stand with the Residents” Commissioner Jesus “Chuy” Garcia](#)

- **Christina Gonzalez, owner, Los Comales in Little Village:** “This tax is unfair. It’s simply ridiculous.... Commissioner Jesus Garcia needs to prove that he is standing with the residents and the small businesses in the 7<sup>th</sup> district and vote to repeal this beverage tax.”
- **Jaime Di Paulo, executive director, Little Village Chamber of Commerce:** “We ask Commissioner Garcia to listen to the residents of Cook County and repeal this devastating tax.”

From [“It’s not too late” Commissioner Stanley Moore](#)

- **Detrice Shelton, 5<sup>th</sup> District resident:** “My commissioner Stanley Moore and seven other commissioners voted for this tax. They chose Toni Preckwinkle and her billionaire friends from New York rather than us and our families.”
- **Marshall Pierce, owner, The Corner Pantry Express:** “Commissioners who support this tax do not care about public health. They have chosen to tax more working families so they can spend more money.... It’s not too late for other commissioners to change their vote and support a repeal.”

From [“Really?” Commissioner Deborah Sims](#)

- **Rosie Regas, owner, Fairplay Foods:** “Commissioner Sims and seven other commissioners stood with President Preckwinkle and voted for this tax.”
- **Melanie Silas, manager, Teddy’s Fruit and Meat Market:** “The Cook County Board is trying to balance the budget on our backs.”



## **Additional Background on the Cook County Beverage Tax**

Since Cook County's beverage tax went into effect on August 2, outrage from Cook County residents and businesses has been overwhelming. Nearly [90% of Cook County residents oppose the tax](#) because they know the tax is aimed at raising revenue to fuel more county spending. Opposition to the tax has been called "[grass-roots hatred](#)" and polls show Cook County voters will hold [Preckwinkle](#) and [county commissioners](#) who support the tax accountable. Simply put, residents are seeing through the campaign of misinformation from Cook County President Preckwinkle and New York City billionaire Michael Bloomberg.

Residents are getting hammered while the beverage tax devastates Cook County businesses. Cook County residents are paying up to 67% percent more on more than 1,000 every day beverages, including juices, iced teas, lemonades, flavored waters, sports drinks, pop and even diet drinks. [Retailers in Indiana and the collar counties](#) are reporting increasing sales, while Cook County retailers are reporting [beverage sales declines of over 50%](#). Some distributors have already reported the decline in sales and lost revenue has [forced them to lay off workers](#).

The impact of Cook County's beverage tax could be devastating, including an estimated 6,100 lost jobs, \$321 million in lost wages and \$1.3 billion in lost economic activity (Dunn & Associates, 2016).

President Preckwinkle is banking on the beverage tax to balance the county's budget for the next three years. But a recent analysis on projected county beverage tax revenue from **Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL)** concludes, "[Cook County estimates this tax will fund 10 percent its FY2018 budget, 2.27 times higher than our prediction.](#)" JLL predicts the county will come up 25-55% short of it projected revenue from the beverage tax – leaving a GAPING hole in the budget the tax was intended to fill. Specifically:

- **JLL Best case: Cook County will come up 28% short of the projected revenue**
  - Cook County only raises \$156.2M in new revenue from the beverage tax – \$44.4M short of its projection.
- **JLL Predicted Case: Cook County will come up 55% short of the projected revenue**
  - Cook County only raises \$88.5M in new revenue from the beverage tax - \$112.1M short of its projection
  - Kicker and unplanned costs: "[N]ew tax implementation spurs administrative and legal costs not considered by the county."

## **About the Can the Tax Campaign and Coalition**

The *Can the Tax* coalition is an initiative of more than a dozen organizations in Cook County uniting to educate Cook County consumers, businesses and news media about the negative impact of the Cook County beverage tax on our local consumers and businesses. The Coalition will urge the Board of Cook County Commissioners to repeal the beverage tax to ensure Cook County residents have access to affordable consumer products and avoid the lost jobs and harm the tax will cause working families. Campaign activities are paid for by the American Beverage Association, a member of the *Can the Tax* campaign and coalition. To learn more, visit [StopTheCookCountyTax.com](#).

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