

Essay

There is a point in time where the citizens of the United States must come together to stand against ridiculous taxes, and stand up for personal rights and freedom. Sadly, this action will come a bit too late for the tobacco industry. If people begin to defend personal liberty now, they may be able to stop any more taxation, including tobacco legislation still upcoming. In fact, the idea of standing up against the excise tax on “unhealthy foods” may be enough to also get people to defend their own civil liberties.

One major problem with taxing these items is that it does not really address many of the underlying causes of obesity. The tax would do nothing to change a person’s way of life, but that is what the tax proposes to do. It does nothing to curtail genetic effects on obesity, which is a large part of the problem. People must realize that in a representative democracy, the government’s job is not to control the way of life of its citizens, but to represent the beliefs of the people. However, this is not the only flawed logic in this idea.

Another problem with this excise tax is that it will hurt an entire industry in an economy that is already depressed. US sugar farmers are already being hurt by vast amounts of imported sugar from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and other Central and South American countries. They are being forced to lower their prices while production costs are either stagnant, or continue to rise. A tax on high sugar items would have the effect of lowering demand for their product, and making it even harder to survive. In the US economic conditions, the government should focus on taking less money from the people and let the citizens regain purchasing power through their personal income. This is one of the underlying problems behind excise taxes, and high amounts of tax in general. Big government can do little to fix an economy, but since our country was based on capitalism, citizens should be allowed to keep more of their money and allow capitalism to correct the economy by itself. This includes tobacco excise taxes. The government hopes to make enough money off of this to fund healthcare, but that is not the job of the government in a capitalist society. It seems that the government is trying to force socialism on the citizens of the United States.

While some people view the issue of excise taxes as simply a tax issue, the truth of the matter is that it is also an issue of the transformation of our society. We as citizens must let our congressmen and representatives know that we are tired of exorbitant taxes. Whether it is on tobacco or food, if the people want an institution to exist, we will fund it with our private wealth, not with revenues from taxes placed on products that we enjoy. We were built, as a country, on capitalist ideals. We need to let our representatives know that we do not want more taxes on food, tobacco or anything else; and we refuse to let more taxation lead us from pure capitalism to socialism. We must band together and make our voices heard, in order to protect our ideals, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.