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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***City of Stockton Passes Second in Nation
'Healthy-by-Default' Kids' Beverage Ordinance***

STOCKTON, CALIF., JUNE 8, 2016 ... Last night, the city of Stockton passed an [ordinance](#) requiring either water or milk to be served as the default beverage in children's meals, the second law of its kind adopted by an American city, following the city of [Davis](#), California. The so-called "healthy-by-default" rule – passed [unanimously](#) by the Stockton City Council – aims to tackle the city's skyrocketing childhood obesity rate and worsening type II diabetes epidemic.

"Added sugar in our food and drink is a major cause of the obesity and diabetes epidemics. Sugary drinks are the single largest source of added sugar in our kids' diets, providing nearly half of their intake," said Petra Stanton, director of Community Health at Dignity Health, St. Joseph's Medical Center. "Consuming just one sugary drink a day significantly increases a child's risk of becoming overweight and developing diabetes later in life. Since restaurants are responsible for one-quarter of a child's diet, this policy will be particularly effective in improving children's health."

In the upcoming months, restaurants that serve meals aimed at children will be required to provide milk, non-dairy milk, water or sparkling water as the default beverage option. Customers will still be able to purchase sodas, juices and other sugary drinks – on request. The ordinance asks restaurants to annually self-certify, and compliance will be enforced under administrative citation procedures.

"Instead of getting an unwanted soda without asking for one – and being forced to negotiate with their child – parents will be given the opportunity to start the meal off right with a healthy beverage," says Vice Mayor Christina Fugazi. "Most parents will stick with the healthier option, protecting their children from the long-term chronic problems associated with liquid candy, such as type 2 diabetes, obesity and tooth decay."

Various studies have linked a daily sugary drink habit to a 26 percent higher risk of type 2 diabetes, a 27 percent increased risk of adult obesity and a 55 percent greater risk of childhood obesity, as well as higher incidences of heart disease, liver disease and metabolic disorder. Sugary drinks contribute directly to diabetes by spiking glucose, converting fructose into fat in the liver and spurring excess insulin production, wearing out the pancreas. Sugary drinks also contribute to weight gain by adding empty calories – void of fiber and nutrients – that do not contribute to fullness.

Today, 55 percent of Californians have prediabetes or diabetes, while 69 percent are overweight and at a higher risk of developing diabetes in the future. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that one-in-three children born today will have diabetes by 2050.

“The city of Stockton took a stand for children’s health today and in so doing established itself as a regional leader,” said Bobby Bivens, president of the NAACP Stockton Branch. “This policy is a common sense measure to support parents’ efforts to protect their children’s health. While communities all over the country wrestle with the disastrous consequences of growing childhood obesity and diabetes epidemics, Stockton drew a line in the sand. The Council showed the powerful role that cities can play in solving big problems. Now, the healthy choice is the easy choice.”

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[Public Health Advocates](#) is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization at the forefront of solving the obesity and diabetes epidemics by advocating for groundbreaking policies that build a healthier California.