Panel 1: Sugar Sweetened Beverage Taxes as a Funding Mechanism for the Retail SNAP Incentive Program

Dr. Amy Nunn

Dr. Amy Nunn is the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Public Health Institute (RIPHI) and Professor of Public Health and Medicine at Brown University. As Executive Director of RIPHI, Dr. Nunn leads evidence-based research and programs that improve health outcomes in Rhode Island and beyond. Dr. Nunn has over 15 years’ experience in directing community-based research and programs to improve public health. She is best known for her innovative programs to address racial disparities in HIV infection, creative efforts to promote access to healthy foods, and her commitments to advocacy related to health equity. In 2020, under her leadership, RIPHI launched Open Door Health, Rhode Island’s first LGBTQ clinic. Dr. Nunn holds masters and doctoral degrees from the Harvard School of Public Health. Dr. Nunn speaks fluent Spanish and Portuguese. She is a proud mother of Agustin (12) and Valentina Velasco (9) and is married to German Velasco.

Dr. Jim Krieger

Dr. Jim Krieger is the Executive Director of Healthy Food America, whose mission is to promote healthy food policy through policy analysis, technical support, research, and public education. He is Clinical Professor of Medicine and Public Health at the University of Washington where he has worked on several SSB tax evaluation projects. He has served on the Institute of Medicine Committee on Evaluating Progress in Obesity Prevention and currently serves on six national advisory committees for initiatives that promote and evaluate healthy food policies. Dr.Krieger has played leading roles in design, adoption, implementation and evaluation of SSB taxes in multiple US cities and is currently working on pending tax legislation in his home state of Washington. He has been a key leader in the development, adoption, and implementation of Seattle’s SSB tax and served as Co-Chair of the city’s Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board. He also has substantial experience with healthy food incentives, having been a leader in the model approach for integration of SSB taxes and healthy food incentives in Seattle.
**Dr. Steve Gortmaker**

Dr. Steven Gortmaker is a Professor of the Practice of Health Sociology at the Harvard Chan School of Public Health where he directs the Harvard Prevention Research Center on Nutrition and Physical Activity (HPRC). His recent work includes the CHOICES project, focused on understanding and modeling the cost-effectiveness of interventions that can improve children’s nutrition and physical activity and reduce the prevalence of obesity. Dr. Gortmaker’s research with colleagues has documented the “energy gap” responsible for recent increases in obesity among children and youth in the United States, and the important role played by excess intake of sugar sweetened beverages. He has been an author or coauthor of more than 240 published research articles, including the first report in the United States concerning the obesity epidemic among children and youth.

**Councilmember Derek Green**

Derek Green has served as an at-large member of the Philadelphia City Council in Pennsylvania since 2016. He holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Virginia and a J.D. from Temple University School of Law. His professional experience includes serving as special counsel to City Councilwoman Marian B. Tasco, counsel to the Finance and Public Health and Human Services council committees and manager and counsel on several campaigns. He has also been a Philadelphia deputy city solicitor, assistant district attorney and assistant deputy attorney general for the State of Delaware. As a member of City Council, Councilmember Green voted in favor of the soda tax in Philadelphia which passed in 2016.

**Bill Sponsors**

**Senator Valerie J. Lawson**

Valarie J. Lawson is Deputy Majority Leader of the Rhode Island State Senate, representing District 14. She is a lifelong resident of East Providence and holds both a Bachelor’s Degree and a Master’s Degree from Rhode Island College. Senator Lawson is a Social Studies teacher at East Providence High School and is Vice President of the National Education Association of Rhode Island. She also serves on the Executive Board of the RI Labor History Society. In addition, Senator Lawson is the former President of the East Providence Education Association and serves on Health and Human Services and Special Legislation and Veteran’s Affairs. She was first elected to the Rhode Island Senate on November 4, 2018.
Representative Jean Philippe Barros
Jean Philippe Barros was first elected to House District 59 in Pawtucket in November 2014. He was first named a Deputy Majority Leader at the start of the 2017 session. He sits on the House Finance Committee and is the chairman of its Public Safety Subcommittee. He is also a member of the House Municipal Government and Housing Committee. Prior to his election to the General Assembly, he served for six years on the Pawtucket City Council. He previously served on the Juvenile Hearing Board from 2007 to 2010 and on the Pawtucket Charter Review Commission. A graduate of Pawtucket’s Tolman High School, he received his Associate’s Degree from the Community College of Rhode Island and his Bachelor’s Degree in Science from Springfield College. He is the director of public works and code enforcement for the City of Central Falls.
Panel 2: Food Access & Transportation: An Equity Intersection

John Flaherty
John Flaherty is Deputy Director of Grow Smart RI, a statewide nonprofit founded in 1998 that provides policy research, development and advocacy to advance community revitalization and sustainable economic development. John’s policy work is focused on working with a broad range of community partners to integrate smart land-use, transportation, housing and natural resource policies that reflect Grow Smart’s commitment to the three E’s - Economy, Equity and Environment. A resident of North Smithfield, he served for several years on the North Smithfield Planning Board and Ordinance Review Committee, chaired the town’s Redevelopment Agency and was elected Town Council President in 2012.

Norbert Mundorf
Norbert Mundorf (Ph.D. Indiana University) is a Professor at the University of Rhode Island (URI), where he has taught since 1987. With his background in Communication he is involved in various interdisciplinary research, teaching and outreach initiatives to promote Sustainable Transportation, Resilience and Health. Research interests include media, global and online communication, as well as sustainability and behavior change. He has worked with the URI Transportation Center, Cancer Prevention Research Center, and the Coastal Institute.

Scott Avedisian
Scott Avedisian became CEO of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) in June 2018 after serving as Mayor of the City of Warwick for 18 years. He is passionate about the importance of public transportation to our state, our businesses, our environment, and our citizens. Under Scott’s leadership, RIPTA has not cut any service during the ongoing pandemic. It remains dedicated to the important role it plays in getting people to essential goods and services across the state. After the onset of COVID-19, Scott reached out to other state agencies and social service organizations to see how RIPTA could be of assistance during this time of need. A variety of meaningful partnerships have resulted, and RIPTA has helped deliver thousands of meals and care packages by assisting the State Office of Healthy Aging and Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island.