

In Copenhagen, in December, we need to achieve the international results that are the strongest in setting these goals and mechanisms in place. I am confident that America will be a leader in Copenhagen, and a leader in bringing forward responsible legislation to deal with energy.

For those who say we should go slow, let me tell you, reviving our economy is intrinsically linked to rethinking how we solve our energy challenges. Investing in new technology creates new jobs. Diversifying our energy sources creates competition, stabilizing and lowering energy prices. And thinking beyond fossil fuel buried in unstable and unreliable countries makes us all more secure. Our dependence on old ways, old patterns, and old resources puts us at a financial and national security disadvantage. Those same fossil fuels we burn to drive our cars, power our homes and heat and treat our water are polluting our air, making our children sick, and raising our planet's temperature. The good news is that in solving our energy security challenge, we can also grow our economy and clean our environment.

But let's remember that any deals we reach in Copenhagen and any laws we pass here are but the beginning. The work must continue with earnest follow-through dedicated to truly changing the way we work and live and move around this Earth.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for up to 5 minutes in morning business, and that I then am followed by the Senator from Michigan, Senator STABENOW.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I rise for two purposes. First, there is a huge argument in America with regard to health care, and we all know one of the main contributing factors to the health difficulties of all Americans is the subject of obesity. There are many opinions about ways to address it, but the most comprehensive way to address it is to be intellectually honest in addressing it.

The President of the Coca-Cola Company was published in an October 8 Wall Street Journal article, and it is a brilliant article on obesity, weight, sugar content, and soft drinks. I commend it to the Senate for their study.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the full article.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Oct. 8, 2009]

COKE DIDN'T MAKE AMERICA FAT

(By Muhtar Kent)

Obesity is a complex issue, and addressing it is important for all Americans. We at the

Coca-Cola company are committed to working with government and health organizations to implement effective solutions to address this problem.

But a number of public-health advocates have already come up with what they think is the solution: heavy taxes on some routine foods and beverages that they have decided are high in calories. The taxes, the advocates acknowledge are intended to limit consumption of targeted foods and help you to accept the diet that they have determined is best.

In cities and states across America—and even at the federal level—this idea is getting increased attention despite its regressive nature and inherent illogic.

While it is true that since the 1970s Americans have increased their average caloric intake by 12%, they also have become more sedentary. According to the National Center for Health Statistics 2008 Chartbook, 39% of adults in the U.S. are not engaging in leisure physical activity. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has found that 60% of Americans are not regularly active and 25% of Americans are not active at all. The average American spends the equivalent of 60 days a year in front of a television, according to a 2008 A.C. Nielsen study. This same research data show that the average time spent playing video games in the U.S. went up by 25% during the last four years.

If we're genuinely interested in curbing obesity, we need to take a hard look in the mirror and acknowledge that it's not just about calories in. It's also about calories out.

Our industry has become an easy target in this debate. Sugar-sweetened beverages have been singled out for demonization in spite of the fact that soft drinks, energy drinks, sports drinks and sweetened bottled water combined contribute 5.5% of the calories in the average American diet, according to the National Cancer Institute. It's difficult to understand why the beverages we and others provide are being targeted as the primary cause of weight gain when 94.5% of calorie intake comes from other foods and beverages.

Those pushing for this tax lack some essential facts, not to mention some basic common sense. Over the past 20 years, the average caloric content of soft drinks has dropped by nearly 25%. This is due in large part to a determined focus by our company and others on the diet/light category with brands like Diet Coke, Coca-Cola Zero and Powerade Zero. Even soft drinks with sugar, like Coca-Cola, contain no more calories (140 calories in a can) than common snacks, breakfast foods and most desserts served up daily in millions of American homes. And while obesity rates have skyrocketed, sales of regular soft drinks decreased by nearly 10% from 2000 to 2008, according to the industry publication Beverage Digest.

So where are all of the extra calories in the American diet coming from? Research from the United States Department of Agriculture shows that added sugars, as a percentage of total daily available calories, have declined 11% since 1970. Yet the percent of calories from added fats and flour/cereal products has increased 35% and 13%, respectively, during that same time period.

Will a soft drink tax change behavior? Two states currently have a tax on sodas—West Virginia and Arkansas—and they are among the states with the highest rates of obesity in the nation.

Obesity is a serious problem. We know that. And we agree that Americans need to be more active and take greater responsibility for their diets. But are soft drinks the cause? I would submit to you that they are no more so than some other products—and a lot less than many, many others.

As a leader in our industry, we have a role to play in solving this issue. Globally, we have led the industry for nearly 30 years with innovations across the diet and light beverage categories. Today, more than 25% of our global beverage portfolio is comprised of low- or no-calorie beverages.

Policy makers should stop spending their valuable time demonizing an industry that directly employs more than 220,000 people in the U.S., and through supporting industries, an additional three million. Instead, business and government should come together to help encourage greater physical activity and sensible dieting, while allowing Americans to enjoy the simple pleasure of a Coca-Cola.

TRIBUTE TO FURMAN BISHER

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, on Sunday of this past week, an event of journalistic magnitude took place in the city of Atlanta and the State of Georgia. A man by the name of Furman Bisher published his last sports column in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. He typed that column on the same manual Royal typewriter upon which he typed his first column 59 years ago.

Furman Bisher is a distinguished employee of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, a distinguished resident of our city and our State. Unlike many in his profession, he had a profound positive effect on his city and his State and on sports. Furman Bisher started writing in Atlanta, GA when Atlanta's only professional sports team was the Atlanta Crackers, a Double-A team playing in a small bandbox stadium in Ponce de Leon Park. In the 1960s, as his career emerged, he, along with Jesse Adler, were the principal writers of sports in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. He began to be published in other magazines, magazines such as Sports magazine, magazines such as the Sporting News. He developed respect around the United States as a gifted, talented, and honest sports writer.

Had it not been for Furman Bisher, the Atlanta Braves probably would not be in Atlanta, GA because when Mills B. Lane and Mayor Ivan Allen risked what then was a huge amount of money, \$18 million, to build a major league sports stadium without a sports team, it was not until Furman Bisher went and talked to the Bartholomay family who were getting ready to move the Milwaukee Braves from Milwaukee and convinced them to bring major league baseball for the first time ever to the South.

The same was true a few years later when Rankin Smith petitioned to buy the first NFL franchise to exist in the South, and that \$7.5 million purchase happened for a lot of reasons but probably the most important of which was Furman Bisher.

What is so great about Furman is he could make sports come alive, from cricket to football, from boxing to golf. His writing on boxing is historic and his following of Atlanta native Evander Holyfield helped elevate Evander to where he became the Heavyweight Champion of the World. But probably