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One of the major domestic health problems America faces today is obesity. Obesity is a medical condition that happens when there is so much extra body fat that it has negative effects on the person's health. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than one-third of U.S. adults (35.7%) are obese, and around 17% (12.5 mil) of U.S. adolescents and children from the ages of two to 19 are obese. One of the ways suggested to combat obesity is to put a ban on selling large sugary drinks in restaurants. However, the U.S. Constitution guarantees its citizens certain rights, including the right to make their own choices as long as those choices do not endanger any other person. Controlling the intake of people's sugary drinks would infringe on those liberties.

Liberty is a central value in any democracy, including in the United States. As it is written in the Declaration of Independence, "*... all men ... are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness*" (US 1776). The Founding Fathers had just freed the thirteen colonies from a government that was oppressive, and they wanted to make sure that their new government wouldn't become oppressive as well, so they also wrote in the Constitution that the United States government must "*... Secure the blessings of Liberty to ourselves, and to our Posterity...*" (Preamble) The U.S. was founded on the belief that no government should unjustly control someone's life, and controlling the intake of someone's sugar would violate this foundational and central value.

Excess sugar can be very dangerous for people's health, but one's intake of sugar should be a personal decision, not something the government decides for people. Unlike other prohibitions the government has put in place, sugar does not affect any one but the eater. The government prohibits drugs because it is harmful to the user, but it also leads people to make choices that can hurt someone else. There is also a connection between drug abuse and crime; according to the NIDA, one half to two thirds of inmates in Federal and State prisons and jails meet the standard criteria for alcohol or drug abuse or dependence. There are speed limits set on roads to help decrease the number of accidents that happen. In 2009, there were 10.8 million car related accidents, and 33,808 people died from speeding-related incidents alone.

History has shown that excessive attempts to restrict U.S. citizen's liberty have failed. During Prohibition, when the sale of alcohol was outlawed, people still found a way to make and consume alcohol. Eventually liquor was made legal again. Rather than prohibiting sugary drinks, a better way to impact American's decisions might be to impose a tax on large sugary drinks, and to start a negative advertising campaign. Since the *Tips* campaign against smoking started in 2012, the average weekly number of calls to 1-800-QUIT-NOW line run by the government has increased by 75%, and in 2012 alone an estimated 1.6 million people in the U.S. made an attempt to quit smoking. The United States government should not regulate sugary drinks, because while Americans may welcome input on their decision-making, they will not relinquish their liberty.

"Topics in Brief: Treating Offenders with Drug Problems: Integrating Public Health and Public Safety." *National Institute on Drug Abuse The Science of Drug Abuse & Addiction*. NIH, n.d. Web. 5 Apr 2014. <<http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/topics-in-brief/treating-offenders-drug-problems-integrating-public-health-public-safety>>.

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Preamble of the US Constitution

Preamble of the US Declaration of Independence

"Tips From Former Smokers Campaign Overview." *CDC: Center for Disease Control and Prevention*. CDC, 3 Jan 2014. Web. 6 Apr 2014. <<http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/about/campaign-overview.html>>.