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Center for Public Interest Law Opposes Increase in Beef AD Tax

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CENTER FOR PUBLIC INTEREST LAW OPPOSES INCREASE IN BEEF AD TAX

SAN DIEGO -- A bill which would allow the California Beef Council to raise its levy on cattle to promote beef consumption would be an unnecessary burden on the consumer, according to Robert C. Fellmeth, Director for the Center For Public Interest Law.

AB 960 (Hallett), as proposed, would increase the Council's tax on cattle from 25 cents to \$1 a head, Fellmeth said.

"Beef may be a very nice food, but why do we have to pay \$1 per head tax to be told it is?" he questioned in the Spring edition of the Center's publication, "The California Regulatory Law Reporter."

He contends the tax will result in an increase in beef prices to the consumer, an increase he says is unnecessary.

Fellmeth, a former San Diego district attorney, also attacked specific marketing order rules specifying the precise size and characteristics of cartons which must be employed in packing various vegetables and fruits.

According to Fellmeth, a San Diego prosecutor was approached by Food and Agriculture inspectors and asked to prosecute some farmers producing oranges because they put oranges in a truck and wrapped them in required plastic bags rather than wrapping them first and then putting them in the truck.

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"Is there some health and safety reason for these minutiae?" he questioned in his commentary column in the reporter. "If not, is it really necessary?"

The Center for Public Interest Law is comprised of a staff of 60 law students and attorneys who monitor more than 60 California agencies throughout the state. The Center publishes a quarterly reporter which includes sections on litigation, legislation and commentary as well as critiques of the various agencies.

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