

Consumer Organizations and Think Tanks Agree: Reform U.S. Sugar Policy

“Government interference in the sugar market hurts consumers and food manufacturers by driving up the price of sugar, reducing export opportunities by giving other countries an excuse to impose similar penalties on U.S.-made products, and weakening the U.S. economy. This Depression-era program, which was supposed to end in 1940, should be abolished.”

—The Heritage Foundation, December 5, 2012

“Food manufacturers that use a lot of sugar are at a competitive disadvantage in the United States because federal import barriers on sugar substantially push up prices for that production input.”

—CATO Institute, November 16, 2012

“Analysts estimate that U.S. consumers and businesses pay anywhere from \$3.5 to \$4.5 billion in higher costs due to the government’s inflation of sugar prices. Taxpayers too, shoulder the burden of the government’s intrusion in the sugar market. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the surplus sugar the government buys and sells, at a loss, to ethanol producers, will cost taxpayers \$374 million over the next decade.”

—Americans for Tax Reform, August 13, 2012

“The current sugar program is nothing more than a hidden tax on American consumers. The special interest sugar program imposes additional unnecessary food costs on every American family and is also responsible for the loss of U.S. food manufacturing jobs. ... In no other program does the federal government take so much from so many to give to a few.”

—National Consumers League, July 6, 2012

“For too long, consumers have been stuck with the tab for a sugar program designed to inflate the domestic price of sugar. Since passage of the 2008 farm bill, refined and retail sugar prices have been at all-time record highs...[S]ugar reform...will provide much needed economic relief to many households.”

—Consumer Federation of America, June 12, 2012

“Under this central planning scheme, the federal government restricts the sugar supply, fixes the domestic price at high levels and keeps out competition. ...[T]he program continues to impose unnecessary price supports, strict production and marketing controls and outdated import quotas. The program is counterproductive, antithetical to a free market economy and has long outlived its usefulness.”

—Competitive Enterprise Institute, April 19, 2012

“Phosphorus from the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) as well as sugar demanding water be wasted to sea continues to be the biggest impediments to a healthy Everglades. Well over half of the EAA’s 700,000 acres is owned by Big Sugar. The sugar program has made Big Sugar very rich. Big Sugar can buy the favors of politicians with ease, and it does just that.”

—Everglades Trust, April 8, 2011

“It is time to dissolve the U.S. sugar program, an imprudent system which has survived since the New Deal era. Its antiquated, Soviet-style command-and-control structure has proven to be detrimental to American consumers and businesses, as it creates artificially high sugar prices that greatly affect the cost of food and beverages.”

—Council for Citizens Against Government Waste,
April 1, 2011

“The sugar program diverts billions of dollars from American consumers to the ‘Big Sugar’ cartel and would understandably make sense to the members of the American Sugar Alliance. But that very costly program certainly doesn’t make any sense at all for the millions of American consumers and thousands of U.S. businesses who were burdened last year alone with \$4.5 billion in higher sugar costs.”

—American Enterprise Institute, January 24, 2011