

By: Veasey

H.C.R. No. 96

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, During the past few decades, obesity has increased
2 dramatically in the United States, but the agricultural policies of
3 the federal government continue to make calorie-dense,
4 nutritionally deficient snack foods far less expensive than
5 healthy, fresh produce; and

6 WHEREAS, In the 1970s, the United States Department of
7 Agriculture ended controls on corn, wheat, and soy production and
8 replaced them with a policy that paid farmers to grow as much of
9 these commodity crops as possible; corn subsidies made the
10 synthetic sugar substitute high-fructose corn syrup cheap and
11 abundant, and today, HFCS is virtually the only sweetener used in
12 soft drinks and represents 40 percent of the non-calorie-free
13 sweeteners added to foods in the United States; and

14 WHEREAS, Because of subsidies, soft drinks containing HFCS
15 are 24 percent cheaper today than in 1985; meanwhile, the price of
16 fruits and vegetables has risen by nearly 40 percent; federal
17 dietary guidelines recommend that fruits and vegetables represent
18 one-third of dietary nutrients, but fruits and vegetables cost 100
19 times more per calorie than HFCS, making it difficult for
20 budget-conscious families to make nutritious choices; and

21 WHEREAS, Consumption of HFCS has increased tenfold since
22 1974; HFCS accounts for more than 80 percent of the 600 calories
23 added to the diet of the average American in recent decades, and
24 those additional calories, combined with sedentary lifestyles,

1 have fueled an obesity epidemic that costs our nation an estimated
2 \$14 billion per year; since 1980, obesity rates in children have
3 tripled, and an increasing number of children are afflicted with
4 conditions previously associated with adulthood, such as Type II
5 diabetes and high cholesterol; more than 70 percent of obese
6 children will go on to become obese adults with increased risks of
7 diabetes, heart disease, and certain cancers; and

8 WHEREAS, Corn subsidies today total more than \$8 billion a
9 year, yet policies enacted through the 2008 Food, Conservation, and
10 Energy Act, better known as the Farm Bill, discourage farmers from
11 growing fruits and vegetables by excluding these crops from income
12 support programs and penalizing farmers for harvesting fruits and
13 vegetables on land receiving subsidies; subsidized commodity crops
14 represent the majority of cropland harvested in the United States,
15 and fruits, vegetables, and all other food crops together composed
16 only six percent of all crop area harvested in 2009; and

17 WHEREAS, It is incongruous and wasteful for health agencies
18 to spend millions of dollars countering obesity while the USDA
19 spends billions to subsidize production of a contributor to this
20 epidemic; decreasing corn subsidies in order to support fruit and
21 vegetable farmers would level the playing field and make healthy
22 food more affordable while reducing the oversupply of high-fructose
23 corn syrup; now, therefore, be it

24 RESOLVED, That the 82nd Legislature of the State of Texas
25 hereby urge the United States Congress to divert some of the
26 subsidies currently used for corn production to the production of
27 fruits and vegetables; and, be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
2 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
3 the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
4 Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
5 members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that
6 this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a
7 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.