



Healthcare Association
of New York State

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 1, 2010

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
WILLIAM VAN SLYKE
(518) 431-7770

**LEGISLATURE CAN ADDRESS SHORTFALLS, PROTECT JOBS, AND IMPROVE
HEALTH STATUS BY PURSUING SMARTER PUBLIC HEALTH CARE POLICIES**

Legislature Must Not Sacrifice Health Services and Jobs to Protect Unhealthy Industries

ALBANY, NY — Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS) President Daniel Sisto today called on legislative leaders to pursue smarter public health policies as a means to promote health and address the state’s historic budget shortfalls.

“The proposals to implement a tax on sugared beverages and increase the tax on tobacco products must be understood as sound and necessary public health policy decisions, not simply as revenue devices,” Mr. Sisto said. “The benefits of both proposals are two-fold. Health care services and jobs in communities across the state that are threatened by further funding cuts can be saved, effectively protecting the health and economic status of communities. Moreover, use of sugared beverages and tobacco products will decrease, further improving health status and reducing health care costs.

“The rejection of these proposals would be bewildering and frustrating to health care professionals, because it would directly sacrifice the availability and sustainability of our health care system in order to stave off taxing products that are literally killing us and making our children seriously ill.

“Hospitals across the state have already eliminated or reduced essential services and laid off thousands of workers. More critical services and thousands of jobs can be protected by implementing these taxes. The benefits to human life, health, and livelihood that will be achieved by adopting them will far exceed any concerns that currently obstruct these common sense options.

“We urge the Legislature to adopt them immediately.”

The Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS) is the only statewide hospital and continuing care association in New York State, representing more than 550 non-profit and public hospitals, nursing homes, home care agencies, and other health care organizations.