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drink sales since it was introduced. Would you not agree a sugar tax would be responsible, gather revenue, increase life chances and health and it would be very sensible. Can he come up with any sensible ideas like that? The honourable member makes an important point and it would make sense if the evidence suggests a soft drinks tax implemented anywhere else in the world had worked. I think he is right to suggest there are a lot of other measures that me as a government owned businesses and organisations can take to address this issue. I do not believe a sugar tax is the right one. Sugar tax advocates pointed to Mexico and the decline in soft drinks since that tax was produced. But there is no link between the introduction of the

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tax and the decline in soft drink purchase. Other measures were also introduced. As the authors of that research admitted, we cannot determine the independent role of each of these taxes. The research even acknowledges there is a lack of information on nutritional data for package strings in Mexico. Researchers cannot see what the fall meant in declining sugar intake. Mexico sometimes does not have safe drinking water. There are people who drink a lot of soda and they do not have access to safe drinking water. How can we compare a developing country with unsafe drinking water with the way attacks would operate here in the UK. Let's compare like with like. When sugar taxes have been tried in developed nations like

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France, they have had a negligible effect. Denmark scrapped its sugar tax in 2014 and labelled it an expensive failure. The Danish Ministry of taxation labelled food and drink taxes as misguided at best and counter-productive at worst. They even describe it as expensive liability for business. A sugar tax would be a very bitter pill for businesses to swallow. Study after study on soft drink taxes in the USA also showed they have a negligible impact on sugary drink intake and calorie consumption. The small decline in sugary drinks was entirely offset by consumption of other sugary products. honourable member for Totnes, I am delighted to give way. I wonder whether he has had an opportunity to look in detail at the British Medical Journal article he refers to because he is quoting a figure of

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6%, but what the article makes clear is that by the end of the year it was 12% overall. If we are going to address the issue of health inequality, in the heaviest users it was 17%. I am very happy to share the paper with him. I will be delighted to take another look at that research. I am delighted to carry on talking. My honourable friend for Totnes has made the case for the sugar tax to protect the poorest. It is a very good point, the poorest children are the most likely to be obese. But the statistics show in low income households in Britain soft drinks purchasers have dropped 14% from 2007-2013. Maybe a 20% sugar tax on soft drinks is not very much to Jamie Oliver and those individuals pushing the idea of a sugar tax, but

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at around 37p for a two litre bottle, for some of those on the lowest incomes who buy these products it is a massive amount of money. I think the point is that we are talking about attacks on sugary drinks, we are not making it so they have not got the choice. There are two different sides of the argument. I thank my honourable friend. As somebody who spent five years working in the soft drinks industry she makes a valuable point. What do we want our children and adult drinking? Sugar or additives? That is a whole separate debate we can have. I tend to choose to drink diet

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variants, but those options are there. The industry is very much driving people to those lower calorie drinks. Take for example Britvic soft drinks. You can buy a 600 millilitre bottle of diet Pepsi or T for the same price as a 500 millilitre full sugar variant. The industry is already encouraging that. Coming back to Mexico, 63% of sugar tax receipts have been collected from low income households and 35% of those came from those in poverty. The industry across the board, labelling has never been better, the choice for consumers has never been better, and the industry is doing a huge amount of work to encourage behavioural change. I am conscious of time. I very much welcome the debate on childhood

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obesity and a clear strategy to reduce it. There are a huge number of measures we can do ourselves, but also encourage businesses and organisations to do as well. Let's ensure this strategy is based on solid evidence. I strongly believe the sugar tax is not the right answer. Before I call the next very experienced member to speak. When there are time limits the first two interventions are compensated and the clock stops. Anything after that and the clock continues. It is so people do not get a fright. Keith Vaz. I will stick to my eight minutes and I will not give way. All right, I will give way. It is a pleasure to follow the honourable member for Colchester. He is hard on himself, he is not obese, he is very well built. I know his enthusiasm for Carrie is known throughout Colchester. It is a pleasure to