



WISCONSIN
CHEESE MAKERS
ASSOCIATION

EST. 1891

June 2, 2023

The Honorable Virginia Foxx, Chair
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairwoman Foxx,

Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association (WCMA) writes in support of the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2023 (H.R. 1147) which would allow whole and reduced-fat milk to be served in school meals, and we respectfully ask the House Committee on Education and the Workforce to approve this critical bipartisan legislation. Providing the option to serve whole and reduced-fat milk allows schools, parents, and children to choose the milk they prefer so that children are more likely to consume milk's 13 essential nutrients.

WCMA, first established in 1891, currently represents 118 dairy processing companies and cooperatives, backed by 604 companies supplying equipment and services to the dairy processing industry, operating in 42 American states and around the world. Our dairy processing members range in size, including both artisan and farmstead manufacturers and some of the largest, multinational corporations with globally recognized brands. All share in our industry's passion and essential mission: providing nutritious, delicious real dairy products to feed the nation and the world.

Milk—including whole (3.25% milkfat), reduced fat (2%), low-fat (1%), non-fat (0%), and lactose-free-- is the top source of calcium, potassium, phosphorus, and vitamin D for kids ages 2-18. In fact, whole and reduced fat milk contain the same nutrients as all other fluid milk, including calcium, phosphorus, protein, vitamins A, D and B12, pantothenic acid, riboflavin, and niacin.

However, since 2012, USDA regulations have only allowed schools to serve low-fat and non-fat milk. During this time period, school milk consumption has continually declined, including a 9% drop in total volume between the 2011-12 and 2015-16 school years when, among other USDA restrictions, whole and reduced-fat milk was banned from schools. The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) highlights that between 68% and 76.2% of school age males and between 77.4% and 94.3% of school age females fail to meet recommended levels of dairy consumption.

The Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act would allow schools to return whole and reduced fat milk to menus to improve school milk consumption and as a result, improve school nutrition.



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We thank Representative G.T. Thompson, Representative Kim Schrier and more than 100 bipartisan House co-sponsors for introducing and supporting the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2023 and respectfully ask the House Committee on Education and the Workforce to approve this legislation. We welcome any questions you may have, and thank you for your impactful public service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John T. Umhoefer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "U".

John T. Umhoefer
Executive Director
Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association