

July 27, 2017

Statement in opposition to the “Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2017”

We, the undersigned organizations oppose the “Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2017” (S.261/HR.772). We do not think that it is common sense to weaken a policy that would allow people to make their own, informed choices about how many calories to eat at a time when obesity rates are at a record high. The bill would undercut the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) menu labeling regulations and undermine congressional intent to provide access to calorie labeling in a broad range of chain food service establishments.

The national menu labeling law requires chain restaurants and similar food establishments to provide consumers with calorie information for standard food and beverage items on menus and menu boards. Studies show that providing nutrition information at restaurants can help people make lower calorie choices, and a national poll found that 80 percent of Americans support calorie labeling at chain supermarkets and restaurants. The bill would undermine the benefits of the national menu labeling law and confuse and mislead consumers.

Pizza chains and other establishments that offer delivery service should post calories on their menu boards just like other chain restaurants, as Congress intended. While some consumers use online menus, others use paper menus at home or menus and menu boards in a restaurant. All menus should list calorie so consumers can see the information when and where they are deciding what to order. Also, pizza chains need only post calories for the standard menu items they list on their menu boards — not every possible pizza combination — just as delis, ice cream shops, burrito stands, and other chains with variable menu items will do. Pizza chains in Vermont, California, Seattle, and other states/municipalities are already posting calorie information on menus—demonstrating it can be done in a reasonable space and at a reasonable cost.

It is important for calories to be listed on a menu in a standard format as an item is offered for sale. Without standardization, people will have more difficulty understanding and using the nutrition information for menu items. Posting the total calories per menu item enables consumers to more easily compare different types of food items, such as nachos, chicken wings, or pizza, and leaves it up to the individual — not the restaurant — to determine how many people will share the item. It would be deceptive to label muffins, entrees, desserts, and most menu items as multiple servings, since items are most often consumed by one person.

The national menu labeling law was a bipartisan compromise supported by public health organizations and the restaurant industry, and it built on the momentum of more than 20 state and local policies. The bill undermines the consensus and compromise worked out between a wide diversity of interests to pass the national menu labeling law. The

bill would weaken an important tool intended to help Americans make informed food choices at a time when obesity and other nutrition-related health problems are at crisis levels, adding significant fiscal and public health burdens on the American public, businesses, and federal, state, and local budgets.

We ask you to support consumer choice and American's health and join us in opposing the Common Sense Nutrition Disclosure Act of 2017 (S.261/HR.772).

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics	Berkeley Media Studies Group
Advocates for Better Children's Diets	Boston Public Health Commission
American Academy of Sports Dietitians and Nutritionists	California Center for Public Health Advocacy
American Association for Health Education	Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network	Cancer Prevention and Treatment Fund
American Council on Exercise	Center for Behavioral Epidemiology and Community Health (CA)
American Diabetes Association	Center for Communications, Health & the Environment
American Heart Association	Center for Science in the Public Interest
American Institute for Cancer Research	ChangeLab Solutions
American Nurses Association	Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (WA)
American Public Health Association	Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago Children, a program of Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
American School Health Association	
American Society of Bariatric Physicians	
Arizona in ACTION	Consumers Union
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials	Corporate Accountability International
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists	City University of New York (CUNY) School of Public Health at Hunter College, Program in Nutrition
B. Komplete	Day One (CA)

Defeat Diabetes Foundation

D'fine Sculpting & Nutrition LLC
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Education

Earth Day Network

Eat Drink Politics

Eat Smart, Move More South Carolina

Ehrens Consulting (ND)

Energy Up!

Food Policy Action

Food Sleuth, LLC

Illinois Public Health Institute

Integrated Medical Weight Loss (RI)

Iowa Public Health Association

Jump IN for Healthy Kids (IN)

Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food,
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LiveWell Colorado

Louisiana Public Health Institute

MomsRising.org

National Action Against Obesity

National Association of County and City
Health Officials

National Congress of Black Women

National Consumers League

National Physicians Alliance

National WIC Association

Nemours Children's Health System

New York City Department of Health and
Mental Hygiene

New York State Department of Health

Nutrition First (WA)

Ohio Public Health Association

Oral Health America

Oregon Public Health Institute

Parents Educators & Advocates
Connection for Healthy School Food (CA)

Piedmont Dialysis Center (NC)

Project Bread- The Walk for Hunger

Public Health Advocacy Institute

Public Health Institute

Real Food For Kids

Real Food For Kids – Montgomery (MD)

Recipe for Success Foundation

School Based Health Alliance of Arkansas

Shape Up America!

Society for Nutrition Education and
Behavior

SuperKids Nutrition

Trust for America's Health

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Young People's Healthy Heart Program
(ND)

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