



MULTNOMAH COUNTY OREGON

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PORTLAND, OREGON 97214

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April 25th, 2005

Senator Vicki Walker
900 Court Street NE
S-210
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Walker:

We are writing to request your consideration of our endorsement of the Healthy Foods for Oregon Schools Act (SB560). This legislation, developed by the Oregon Nutrition Policy Alliance (NPA), proposes to set standards for the food sold outside of the federally regulated school food programs. Known as 'competitive foods', there are currently no state standards regarding the candy, soda, doughnuts and other high-calorie, low-nutrition foods sold at vending machines, school stores, or other outlets alongside of the federally regulated school food programs.

It is important to note this legislation will not eliminate the vending machines found in schools but will regulate the nutritional content of the foods being sold. Many school districts in the US have made similar changes like these ones proposed with no effect on revenue to schools. Recently, a University of Arizona study concluded similar changes to the ones proposed were revenue neutral. Additionally, five states, including California and Washington, have passed similar legislation.

Childhood obesity has reached epidemic levels in Oregon and throughout the nation. Recent studies have shown more than fifteen percent of Oregon youth are overweight. In addition, adolescent obesity has tripled over the past two decades in Oregon. The long-term impact to the health of these children is alarming. Cardiovascular disease, stroke, high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes, asthma, and certain cancers are all at-risk diseases for obesity. The cost implications to our health care system are staggering.

We endorse the policy proposed by the Oregon Nutrition Policy Alliance to establish nutrition standards for 'competitive foods' in Oregon's public schools. We urge you to pass SB560.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Diane Linn" with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Diane Linn

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maria Rojo de Steffey" in a cursive style.

Maria Rojo de Steffey

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Serena Cruz" in a cursive style.

Serena Cruz

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa Naito" in a cursive style.

Lisa Naito

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lonnie Roberts" in a cursive style.

Lonnie Roberts