

## **Please Cosponsor the Child Nutrition Promotion and School Lunch Protection Act**

Dear Senator Chambliss:

As a resident of Georgia, I urge you to cosponsor the bipartisan Child Nutrition Promotion and School Lunch Protection Act (S. 934), introduced by Senators Harkin and Murkowski. As you know, good nutrition is central to children's health and ability to learn.

The bill calls on the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to update its national school nutrition standards for foods sold outside of school meals. This includes foods sold through vending machines, school stores, and a la carte in the cafeteria. The current standards are out of date and do not reflect current concerns regarding children's diets and health. For example, they do not address calories, portion sizes, saturated or trans fat, or sodium content of foods.

By developing a pattern for eating low-nutrition foods, children increase their risk of developing diet-related diseases, such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes. U.S. health care costs due to obesity are \$95 billion a year, half of which is paid through Medicare and Medicaid. With nearly \$1 of every \$6 of our economy spent on healthcare, we cannot afford to continue to sell junk food in schools.

National action is needed. Selling unhealthy food in competition with federal meal programs undermines taxpayer investments in the National School Lunch and Breakfast programs. Nutrition standards for both the meal programs *and* foods sold outside of meals should be updated and based on nutrition science. USDA is already updating standards for meals. Congress should require that they also update standards for food sold outside of meals and apply them consistently throughout the whole campus and school day.

Current state and local regulation of competitive foods has yet to be effective. It has created a patchwork of policies; two-thirds of states still have weak or no nutrition standards for foods sold outside of meals. Don't children in Georgia deserve the same access to good nutrition as kids in Kentucky or Oregon? Also, this patchwork of policies is more costly for companies, which must reformulate products to multiple standards, and it makes it harder for schools to find products that meet its standard.

I look forward to hearing whether you will cosponsor the Child Nutrition Promotion and School Lunch Protection Act.

Sincerely,

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Email \_\_\_\_\_