



American Public Health Association

Protect, Prevent, Live Well

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March 21, 2011

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Service
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association (APHA), the oldest and most diverse organization of public health professionals and advocates in the world, I write in support of the *Health and Sustainability Guidelines for Federal Concessions and Vending Operations* as an excellent example of implementation strategies for the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Many of our members are experts in nutrition and chronic disease prevention, and are advocates for policies which will reduce obesity and improve health. APHA stands ready to work with you on this initiative and other efforts to improve healthy eating options for all Americans.

These guidelines demonstrate your department's commitment to increasing opportunities for Americans to eat healthfully and are an excellent model for other organizations. We believe that the guidelines are an important part of obesity prevention making it possible for working Americans to follow recommendations to lower energy intake and increase energy expenditure at vending machines and in cafeterias. The guidelines will also make it easier to eat a diet that protects against heart disease, diabetes, and some forms of cancer by increasing access to foods that are lower in trans fats, sodium, and added sugars.

APHA has long supported good nutrition as a cornerstone to promoting the public's health. In 2007, APHA was among the first major U.S. health associations to adopt comprehensive policy on the food system and health entitled, *Toward a Healthy, Sustainable Food System* which is available at: www.apha.org/advocacy/policy/policysearch/default.htm?id=1361. The policy outlines many of the steps APHA believes are necessary for improving the health of our citizens and creating a healthier, more sustainable food system. The guidelines you have put forth are consistent with our support for a food system that not only protects us against nutrition-related diseases but also protects environmental health and encourages sustainable agricultural practices. We believe these comprehensive approaches are essential to protecting the nation's health. Please accept our most sincere gratitude for your leadership on this critical public health issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Georges C. Benjamin'.

Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP, FACEP (E)
Executive Director