



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 5, 2013
TO: Health Care Committee
FROM: Archana Thapa-Campbell, Operations Manager
Operations Section
SUBJECT: Testimony on Healthy snacks in state vending machines

- To promote a healthy and happy work place, our Attorney General encourages DOJ employees to live a healthy lifestyle.
- Almost four years ago the Department of Justice established a Wellness Committee whose goal was to encourage employees to practice healthy habits such as eating healthy and getting regular exercise.
- One of the ways in which the Wellness Committee believed DOJ employees could find healthier options was if the vending machines in our buildings were stocked with healthy food and beverages.
- In November 2009, DOJ contacted the Blind Commission who administers the vending machines in state buildings to ask for healthy products. Initially, the response was that the vending machine contractor Northwest Vending Company (NVC) does not provide healthier snacks as they would not be sufficiently profitable to provide them.
- As DOJ kept insisting, NVC did provide a brochure of their healthier snacks, but we did not find that their offerings met our needs.
- Finally about seven months later we began getting the healthier choices we had asked for initially. It was not without compromise though, only a third of the snacks stocked in our pilot program vending machines were healthier snacks. We would like more healthier snacks but continue to get pushback from the vendor. The initial bags were also larger and higher priced. It took an additional three to four months to reduce the size of the bags and the prices to a point where employees would purchase them.
- HB3403 will help public employees meet their own health goals and by eating healthy. Current vending machines do not support public employees in their efforts to make healthier choices.
- A set of uniform healthy snack standards will make it much easier for us (and our employees) to succeed in our multiple facilities; it is challenging to make these changes on a building by building basis.
- The Attorney General is committed to helping DOJ employees live healthy lives, and providing healthier snack options in our vending machines. Unhealthy vending machine snacks and sugary beverages are direct obstacles for public employees working hard to lose weight.