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5-13-2015

Oregon Senate Committee on Education
Chair Arnie Roblan

Honorable Chair Roblan and Committee, I am writing this letter on behalf of the Oregon School Nutrition Association. Our association represents over 500 school nutrition professionals throughout our State. Our membership is represented in each county in the State.

Not only am I President of OSNA, I am a School Nutrition Services Director in McMinnville Oregon where we employ 35 people and serve over 6600 students. We serve on average 3800 lunches and 2250 breakfasts each school day. I have worked in this field for 33 years and hold a bachelor's degree in dietetics from Oregon State University. I know that school lunches are nutritious and vital to the health of our students and the students of Oregon and the United States. There have been many changes in child nutrition programs over the years and recently, many of the changes have been good.

I and my colleagues support nutritious lunches and snacks in schools and support strong standards for foods sold outside school meals in vending, school stores, through fundraisers and clubs. In Oregon we implemented these strong standards with House Bill 2640, Oregon law 336.423 and more recently with Oregon Smart Snacks.

Since Federal Standards for Smart Snacks have been adopted, we believe that Oregon Smart Snacks should be aligned with Federal Standards. Specifically, we support the original language in HB 2404 on page 3 lines 8 through 14 around the entrée exemption. Entrees are currently limited to 450 calories and 36 % fat. That has already limited the ala carte sales of some of our most popular food items.

While we prefer that students take a complete meal, there are times a student does not want or cannot afford a complete meal. Sometimes all a person wants for lunch is a sandwich, salad or slice of Pizza. Under the proposed amendment many of these items would be banned. That is even if the item is acceptable under the federal standards to serve as an entrée in a meal.

The entrees we serve are already specially formulated for schools to be lower in fat, saturated fat, sodium and sugar than the same Pizza a person might purchase at a grocery store or restaurant. The portion sizes are prescribed by age group and all grain entrees must be whole grain. We are required to have standardized recipes that meet nutrition standards for all meals and entrees. It lacks logic to be able to serve a standardized entrée in a meal but not as an ala carte entrée as is allowed by current Federal Standards.

Oregon has done a good job working to protect the health of its students with the previous limits set on foods sold outside school meals. Our State was in the fore front and was a model for some of the new standards but now there are Federal Standards setting limits from the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010. Food producers have worked to meet those standards based on the Federal language. We believe that it is time that Oregon is aligned with Federal Standards as was written in the original language of House Bill 2404.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Hiatt-Henry
President, 2014-2015
Oregon School Nutrition Association