



Protect, Prevent, Live Well

September 22, 2010

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman
House Committee on Education and Labor
Washington, DC 205515

Dear Chairman Miller:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association, the oldest and most diverse organization of public health professionals and advocates in the world dedicated to promoting and protecting the health of the public and our communities, I write in strong support of S. 3307, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which could come to the House floor for a vote later this week. We thank you for your continued leadership on child nutrition issues and we stand ready to work with you to pass this important public health legislation.

Good nutrition should begin in childhood when eating habits are formed and chronic diseases begin to develop. Yet over the last two decades, rates of obesity have tripled in children and adolescents. Only 2% of children eat a healthy diet which can increase the risk of heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes, which are leading causes of death, disability, and high healthcare costs.

We are pleased with the new investments and important policy changes included in this critical public health legislation. Specifically, the bill would: update the nutrition standards of school meals; limit the sale of junk food in schools; provide greater reimbursement and more training to schools so they can serve more nutritious meals; improve and simplify the application process; increase the use of foods from local and regional sources and support improved school nutrition and physical activity wellness policies.

Thank you again for your leadership and for making our children's health a priority. We urge the House to quickly pass the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act and send it to the president for his signature before the programs expire on September 30.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Georges C. Benjamin'.

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

Cc: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
The Honorable John Boehner