



Federal Trade Commission

FTC/HHS Marketing, Self-Regulation, and Childhood Obesity Workshop

Thursday, July 14, 2005

Chairman Majoras

9:00 - 9:15 am

Good morning and welcome to the “Marketing, Self-Regulation, and Childhood Obesity Workshop.” I would like to express my appreciation for the hard work of the staffs of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Federal Trade Commission to make this event possible.

A couple of months ago, Bart Simpson was sent off to “fat camp” after he gorged himself on junk food from school vending machines. And Jay Leno introduced a new version of a wall chart for parents to use to record their children’s growth – horizontally. These were funny sketches, but in truth, childhood obesity is no laughing matter. These popular media segments, as well as the huge crowd we have drawn this morning, illustrate that we all know we have a problem.

What brings us together this morning and over the next two days is, at bottom, a shared concern for the health of our children. Our nation is engaged in a vigorous debate over what factors contribute to childhood obesity. There are many alleged “suspects”: developers for the suburban sprawl that puts us in our cars, not on our feet; schools for cutting physical education programs and meeting budget shortfalls through vending machines sales; video and computer games for competing with more physical play time; parents for over-indulging their children and failing to set a good example and buy healthy foods; restaurants for increasing portion sizes; and

remarks.