



July 14, 2011

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Jon Leibowitz
Chairman
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580

Re: Interagency Working Group on Food Marketed to Children FTC Project No. P095413

Dear Chairman Leibowitz:

On behalf of the Midwest Food Processors Association (MWFP), I am writing to express our deep concerns regarding the Interagency Working Group on Food Marketed to Children's *Preliminary Proposed Nutrition Principles to Guide Industry Self-Regulatory Efforts*.

MWFP represents a variety of food processors in Wisconsin, Illinois and Minnesota that operate over 100 facilities with an estimated economic impact of well over \$12 billion. In our view, the preliminary proposal released by the working group ignores current science; conflicts with existing dietary guidance issued by the federal government, and would do severe economic harm to food processors in Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

First, the Interagency Working Group (IWG) incorrectly assumes that by implementing the proposed nutrition guidelines the rate of childhood obesity in the United States would decrease. However, the IWG does not offer any decisive scientific evidence to show that this will be the case, and in fact, seemingly ignores the conclusion reached in a 2005 report by the Institute of Medicine which found that "current evidence is not sufficient to arrive at any finding about a causal relationship from television advertising to adiposity." Proposing such sweeping guidelines without the backing of sound, scientific evidence is not good public policy.

Second, the proposed nutrition standards are contrary to other dietary guidance issued by the federal government. For instance, many canned products that are eligible for inclusion in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) would not meet the nutrition criteria in the proposed guidelines. In addition, many of those same products carry the FDA definition of "healthy," and yet they would also be considered foods "of little or no nutritional value" by the IWG's standards.

Finally, the Interagency Working Group did not take into account the economic impact this proposal may have on food processors across the United States, including those in Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. A recent economic analysis conducted by IHS Global Insights concluded that a 20% reduction in food and beverage advertising expenditures due to the IWG's proposal would result in a decrease in total annual sales of \$28.3 billion and eliminate 74,000 jobs in 2011. Considering the broad impact that this proposal is likely to have on the food industry and the food industry supply chain, at least some analysis by the IWG as to the economic impact would have been prudent.

MWFPA is supportive of efforts to reduce the incidence of childhood obesity in the United States. This proposal does not effectively take us in that direction. It will have no impact on rate of obesity, conflicts with several areas of federal dietary guidance, and would inflict severe economic harm on food processors and their supply chains.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that you withdraw this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nickolas C. George, Jr.
President, MWFPA

cc: Members of the Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin Congressional Delegation