

Written by Sen. Tom Harkin
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December 2, 2010

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey (D-CA-06) lauded today's passage of the *Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act* by the House of Representatives by a vote of 264-157. In particular, they singled out praise for a provision that would require the Secretary of Agriculture to set nutrition standards for all foods sold on the grounds of schools participating in the National School Lunch Program, consistent with their jointly introduced legislation, the *Child Nutrition Promotion and School Lunch Protection Act*.

Harkin and Woolsey have introduced this legislation every Congress since 2006. Harkin has sought similar protections since the mid 1990s.

"For too long, we have allowed the unchecked sale of junk food in our schools to undermine not just the health of our kids, but also the desires of parents, and our taxpayer investment in school meals," **said Harkin**. "House passage of the *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act* moves us one step closer to requiring common-sense nutrition standards for the foods and beverages sold in schools. With this provision, the bill will help make the healthy choice, the easy choice. We also know that it's the choice that parents around the country prefer. Survey after survey shows that parents support school nutrition standards at school that reinforce the healthy choices that parents try to make for their kids at home."

"It's been 30 years since the regulations limiting junk food sales in schools were updated, despite significant advances in nutrition science and a troubling growth in childhood obesity," **said Woolsey**

. "Updating the nutrition standards for foods sold in vending machines, a la carte lines, and school snack bars is a common sense way to confront childhood obesity head on."

Under the terms of the provision, section 208, the Secretary of Agriculture is required to propose science-based school nutrition standards for all foods sold in schools, including vending machines, snack bars, and school stores, not later than one year after enactment of the bill. Following a notice and comment period, the standards must go into effect not earlier than one year after the regulations are finalized. Under the terms of the legislation, the

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Secretary of Agriculture is also required to review and, if necessary, update the school nutrition standards after the publication of a new edition of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

This fiscally responsible and bipartisan *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act* reauthorizes the nation's major Federal child nutrition programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), including the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Child and Adult Care Food Program, and Summer Food Service Program. The bill provides \$4.5 billion in additional funding over the next 10 years – nearly ten times the amount of money provided for the previous child nutrition reauthorization, and the largest new investment in child nutrition programs since their inception.

The bill is partially paid for by eliminating \$2.2 billion in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) temporary benefit increase under the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*. President Obama, however, has committed to work with Congress to replace this offset before these SNAP cuts take place in November 2013.