

## Letter to Support Legislation

1. Name of persons submitting proposed legislation for review by the PPP – Marcy Kyle
2. Name of Legislation (bill in separate attachment)

### **An Act To Align State Standards Pertaining to Food and Beverages outside of the School Lunch Program to Federal Standards**

3. Brief Summary of the Bill

The intention is to have Maine adopt the Federal rules that are currently under development as a result of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act that pertain to nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold on school grounds but outside of school meal programs during the school day. For foods and beverages sold outside of the school day, Maine would continue to follow Chapter 51. Chapter 51 states that any food or beverage sold at any time on school property shall not include foods of minimal nutritional value unless permitted by local policy. Because culinary arts programs would be exempt, the Maine Public Health Association Obesity Policy Committee suggested that wording be tightened to say “to products prepared by” before the word culinary so that it didn’t open it up to products they wanted to bring in from elsewhere.

4. Who is the sponsor of the Bill - Representative Patrick Flood (R-Winthrop)
5. Which ADA priority area does legislation address?

Child Nutrition

Objective: Improve nutritional content of foods at school as well as through the WIC program. Expand local school wellness policies and improve outcomes. Raise visibility of ADA members' knowledge, skills and talents in their communities.

Local Support for Nutrition Integrity in Schools  
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Abstract It is the position of the American Dietetic Association (ADA) that schools and communities have a shared responsibility to provide students with access to high-quality, affordable, nutritious foods and beverages. School-based nutrition services, including the provision of meals through the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program, are an integral part of the total education program. Strong wellness policies promote environments that enhance nutrition integrity and help students to develop lifelong healthy behaviors. ADA actively supported the 2004 and proposed 2010 Child Nutrition reauthorization which determines school nutrition policy. ADA believes that the Dietary Guidelines for Americans should serve as the foundation for all food and nutrition assistance programs and should apply to all foods and beverages sold or served to students during the school day. Local

wellness policies are mandated by federal legislation for all school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program. These policies support nutrition integrity, including a healthy school environment. Nutrition integrity also requires coordinating nutrition education and promotion and funding research on program outcomes. Registered dietitians and dietetic technicians, registered, and other credentialed staff, are essential for nutrition integrity in schools to perform in policy-making, management, education, and community-building roles. A healthy school environment can be achieved through adequate funding of school meals programs and through implementation and evaluation of strong local wellness policies.

6. What is your view of the reason/benefit for an MDA position on this bill? Expert opinion provided by Mary Emerson and Lori Kaley

This bill relates to the work of MDA members as it regards the nutritional quality of foods sold in schools to children and their subsequent health. These federal rules will be a welcome improvement in nutrition standards for foods and beverages that compete with school meals and have been typically high in calories, fat, sugar, sodium and low in fiber and nutrients. Poor nutritional quality of foods and beverages made available to children in the school environment contributes to obesity, type II diabetes, hypercholesterolemia, hypertension and inability to learn at maximum potential.

Consistent nutrition standards in the school environment is essential not only for clarity of the nutrition message that the student receives so they understand what healthy food choices are, but also to support the financial integrity of the school nutrition program.

School nutrition operations are not funded by general education funds, but rather are expected to be self sufficient. The majority of school nutrition programs in Maine are not, but rather they require money from their district to balance their budget. Others selling food products of either larger portions or foods of minimal nutritional value on school grounds compete with school nutrition programs who need the revenue of all food sales of ala carte items to help them balance their budget.

7. What would be the potential downside for MDA involvement on this issue? none