

May 19, 2010

The Honorable George Miller
United States House of Representatives
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Miller:

We know how much you care about children's health. That's why we're joining the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine in urging you to support the Healthy School Meals Act, H.R. 4870.

This bill would help schools add healthy plant-based vegetarian options in lunch lines. Two years ago, we switched to a plant-based diet out of concern for animals and the environment. Many children stop eating meat for the same reasons. Adding vegetarian options in schools would not only benefit these children-it would provide healthier options for all young people.

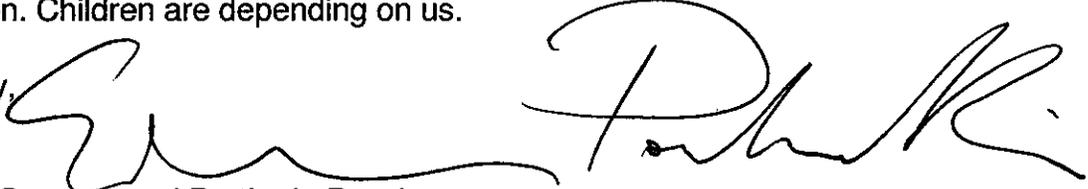
Obesity, diabetes, and other diet-related health problems are showing up in children at disturbingly high rates. One out of five teenagers already has abnormal cholesterol levels. Fighting this epidemic is one of the most urgent challenges we face-and healthier school lunches could play a vital role.

The Healthy School Meals Act would improve children's eating patterns by introducing them to healthful foods early in life. The legislation would create a pilot program to provide select schools with plant-based vegetarian options. These options would then be added to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's commodities list and would be available to all schools.

The Healthy School Meals Act is the easiest way to decrease children's overall intake of saturated fat and cholesterol. It would simply provide a healthier option for children to try. Even if students choose a plant-based option just once or twice a week, they'll be consuming significantly less fat and cholesterol-and that could make a huge difference in their health.

Please include the Healthy School Meals Act language in revised child nutrition legislation. Children are depending on us.

Sincerely,


Ellen DeGeneres and Portia de Rossi