



March 17, 2010

Honorable Representative Jared Polis  
Member of the House Education and Labor Committee  
501 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Polis,

The Soyfoods Association of North America (SANA), which represents the interests of small and large soyfood manufacturers, soy processors, suppliers, soybean farmers, and other industry stakeholders, would like to express our support for the Healthy School Meals Act.

SANA believes that in order to support a generation of healthy, active children, an emphasis on nutritionally dense school meals that meet the needs of a diverse student body is needed. A recent survey of schools by the School Nutrition Association documented that 65% of school districts have one school offering vegetarian options to students, but this is not necessarily a plant-based option. In these fiscally constrained times, schools need incentives to offer more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins that include plant-based options. The Soyfoods Association of North America believes the high-quality of soy protein in soyfoods should be the center piece of school meals for children who desire nutrient dense plant-based options. Soy protein is equivalent to animal protein but without saturated fat and cholesterol; and soyfoods are generally lower in calories. Soyfoods can serve as meat alternates and milk alternates for students who avoid meat and dairy alternatives because of health conditions, religious beliefs, or cultural practices.

The Healthy School Meals Act provides some initial steps towards encouraging more plant-based meal options in our nation's school cafeterias. Through pilot program testing and incentives, this piece of legislation strives to encourage more diverse options in school meals and provides our children with nutritious foods that help prevent obesity and chronic diseases that are more frequently occurring in childhood and adolescence.

The Soyfoods Association of North America fully supports the Health School Meals Act and encourages members of Congress to pass this important piece of legislation in order to ensure healthy generations of children to come.

Sincerely,

Nancy Chapman RD, MPH  
Executive Director

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