



February 1, 2008

House Committee on Education  
 Representative Roy M. Takumi, Chair  
 Representative Lyla B. Berg, Ph.D., Vice Chair

**Re: H.B. 2993, Relating to School Nutrition**

Good afternoon, Chairman Takumi and members of the House Committee on Education. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB 2993. The American Beverage Association (ABA) represents Hawaii's non-alcoholic beverage producers and distributors, employs hundreds of people, and markets numerous brands, flavors and packages, including diet and full calorie carbonated soft drinks, ready-to-drink teas and coffees, bottled waters, fruit juices, fruit drinks, dairy-based beverages, and sports drinks. ABA acknowledges that the incidence of childhood obesity, type-2 diabetes and other nutritionally related diseases is on the increase in Hawaii and across the nation, however, **based on current industry practice, it is not necessary to legislate the sale of beverages in elementary, intermediate, and middle schools.**

Adoption of School Beverage Guidelines

ABA and the Hawaii beverage industry agrees that all of us – policymakers, parents, educators, industries and community leaders – have a responsibility to do our part to help teach our children how to have a healthy lifestyle. We are proud to report that **the Hawaii beverage industry is currently implementing school vending restrictions that are more restrictive than HB 2993.**

In May of 2006 the American Beverage Association, Cadbury Schweppes, The Coca-Cola Company and PepsiCo teamed up with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation (a joint initiative of the William J. Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Association) to develop new School Beverage Guidelines that limit calories and increase nutritious beverages in schools.

The guidelines provide students with a broad array of lower- and no-calorie options along with nutritious and smaller-portioned beverages to help kids build healthy habits as they learn to balance the calories they consume with the calories they burn. The guidelines are designed to balance children's nutritional and hydration needs with appropriate caloric consumption for their age and limits beverage offerings to water, milk and juice as follows:

Elementary Schools:

- Bottled water
- Up to 8 ounce servings of milk and 100% juice
  - Low fat and non fat regular and flavored milk and nutritionally equivalent (per USDA) milk alternatives with up to 150 calories/8 ounces
  - 100% juice with no added sweeteners, up to 120 calories/8 ounces, and with at least 10% daily value of three or more vitamins and minerals

Middle Schools:

- Same as elementary school except juice and milk can be sold in 10 ounce servings

These guidelines apply to beverages sold on school grounds during the regular and extended school day.

Our companies are removing full-calorie soft drinks from elementary, middle and high schools throughout America – an unprecedented move by a member of the broader food and beverage industry. They're also reducing the portion sizes of many beverages and capping the calories of products offered in schools. This does not come without real cost and risk to the industry.

#### Guidelines Developed Using Nutrition Science

The American Heart Association wielded great influence in the development of the School Beverage Guidelines along with the Clinton Foundation and the beverage industry.

The guidelines were designed using nutrition science, including the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005* as well as the *American Heart Association's Dietary Guidelines for Healthy Children* and *2006 Diet and Lifestyle Recommendations* in order to balance children's nutritional needs with the requirement to manage caloric consumption.

The guidelines are also developmentally appropriate, taking the age of the student into great account. They balance children's nutritional and hydration needs with appropriate caloric consumption.

#### Committed to Implementation

The beverage industry is working hard to implement these guidelines in Hawaii and across the nation. In just over one year since we signed the Memorandum of Understanding with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, our companies have spent hundreds of hours training their marketing and sales teams about the guidelines. These teams have reached out to school contract partners to educate them. Our companies are reformulating products. They are creating new package sizes to meet the smaller portion sizes required in the guidelines. And, they are retrofitting vending machines to accommodate the changes in package sizes.

Calories from beverages shipped to schools have dropped 41 percent across America thanks to the beverage industry's progress implementing the School Beverage Guidelines. The *School Beverage Guidelines Progress Report 2006-2007* released in September, 2007 is the initial report on implementation of the national guidelines, which call for industry to provide for lower-calorie, smaller-portion and nutritious options in schools. The removal of full-calorie soft drinks as well as the calorie caps and smaller portion sizes imposed on other beverages, like sports drinks and juice, are contributing to the overall cut in calories in schools.

#### Conclusion

The American Beverage Association and the Hawaii beverage industry welcome the opportunity to work with the Committee to educate schools about the beverage industry's School Beverage Guidelines that offer more lower-calorie and nutritious beverages.

The Hawaii beverage industry has taken the extraordinary step of moving beyond current state law through implementation of our School Beverage Guidelines. Limiting calories in schools is a sensible approach that acknowledges our industry's long-standing belief that school wellness efforts must focus on teaching kids to consume a balanced diet and get plenty of exercise. Our industry will continue to do its part to help our kids learn how to have a healthy life.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 2993.