

# Protect Our Children's Health!

## An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition

### **THE PROBLEM: Soda and junk food are feeding an epidemic of obesity and diabetes among our children.**

In Massachusetts, 29% of children and 55% of adults are overweight or obese. Rates of obesity among children have more than doubled in the past two decades.

Overweight children are at higher risk of developing diabetes, asthma, heart disease, depression and low self-esteem. Poor nutrition reduces children's ability to learn.

Children are over-eating food and drinks high in fat and sugar. One source of this problem is the sale of junk food in schools. The easy availability of candy bars, chips, and soda in school vending machines encourage unhealthy eating habits.



One 20 ounce soda has 17 teaspoons of sugar and 250 "empty" calories.

### **A SOLUTION: Better food choices for children in school.**

**The time to prevent obesity is in childhood and schools are an excellent place to start.**

Children learn the habits of a lifetime at school. One of those habits should be healthy eating. Schools should provide nutritious food options to help children learn good eating habits and reduce the risk of health problems.

**An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition**, sponsored by State Representative Peter Koutoujian, is an important part of the solution. In Massachusetts public schools, it will:

- Replace sodas with healthier drinks, such as water, low- and non-fat milk, and juice
- Set healthy standards for fat and sugar in snacks
- Make fresh fruits and vegetables available in cafeterias

### **ACTION: Your help is needed to pass this bill!**

- **Endorse** the bill by filling out and returning the attached endorsement form to MPHA.
- **Contact** your state legislators and urge them to support An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition. To determine who they are, visit [www.WhereDoIVoteMA.com](http://www.WhereDoIVoteMA.com), or contact MPHA. Call your legislators at the State House at (617) 722 - 2000.
- **Share** copies of this fact sheet with your friends, family, and neighbors and ask them to contact their legislators.
- **Ask** your school board members, PTA, church, or hospital to endorse this bill.
- **Write** a letter to your local newspaper in support of this bill.



Almost 80% of children who are overweight will become obese adults.

Chief Sponsor

Representative Peter Koutoujian

Co-Sponsors

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**Yes! I support improving school nutrition!  
I want to help Massachusetts children make healthier food choices in schools.  
I support An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition.**

Name:

Organization:

Title:

- My organization endorses An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition.
- I endorse An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition.

Address:

Phone:

Email:

***Please check ALL that apply:***

- \_\_\_ I can recruit other supporters of An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition.
- \_\_\_ I am willing to call my legislators to ask them to support the bill.
- \_\_\_ I am willing to meet with my legislators to urge them to support the bill.
- \_\_\_ I would like to submit a letter to the editor of my local paper in support of the bill.  
(MPHA can help you write it.)
- \_\_\_ I can write an article on the bill for my organization or school newsletter.
- \_\_\_ I will contact my school committee members about the bill.
- \_\_\_ I will contact my local town council/board of selectmen about the bill.

**Thank you for your endorsement and support!**

**Please return this completed form to:**

Roberta Friedman, Director of Education, Massachusetts Public Health Association  
434 Jamaicaaway Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 or rfriedman@mphaweb.org or fax: (617) 524-5225

For more information contact Roberta at the above email or (617) 524-6696 x103.