

# Protect Our Children's Health!

## H. 4376, An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition

### **THE PROBLEM:** Junk food and sugary drinks are contributing to an epidemic of obesity and diabetes among our children.

In Massachusetts, 26% of high school students 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 also 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.



### **A SOLUTION:** Healthy food choices for our children at school.

The time to prevent obesity is in childhood and schools are an excellent place to start. Children learn the habits of a lifetime in school – one of those habits should be healthy eating.

### **HOUSE BILL 4376, An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition:**

- Directs the Department of Public Health (DPH) to establish healthy standards for snacks and beverages sold in vending machines, school stores, and cafeteria ala carte lines. These standards are to be in accordance with Institute of Medicine guidelines, which recommend that sodas be replaced with water, low- and non-fat milk, and juice; fat and sugar be reduced in snacks; and fresh fruits and vegetables be made available in cafeterias.
- Establishes a Governor's Commission on Childhood Obesity to develop a coordinated statewide plan to reduce childhood obesity.
- Requires DPH and the Department of Education (DOE) to set guidelines for the training of school nurses to help children with diabetes and eating disorders and to collect and evaluate data on these conditions.
- Calls for an investigation of how to make it easier for schools to purchase fresh foods from local farmers.



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

### **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 House Bill 4376, An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition. To determine who they are, visit [www.WhereDoIVoteMA.com](http://www.WhereDoIVoteMA.com), or contact MPHA. Then call your legislators at the State House: (617) 722-2000.
- **SHARE** copies of this fact sheet with your friends, family, and neighbors and urge 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.

**H. 4376, An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition, is endorsed by the following organizations and individuals:**

**Endorsers**

American Cancer Society  
 American Diabetes Association  
 Amesbury Board of Health  
 Arthritis Foundation, Massachusetts Chapter  
 Berkshire Food Project  
 Berkshire SHARE  
 Boston Organization of Nutritionists & Dieticians (BOND) of Color  
 Boston City Council  
 Boston Healthcare for the Homeless  
 Boston Public Health Commission  
 Boston Public Schools Department of Food & Nutrition Services  
 Boston Teachers Union  
 Boston Urban Asthma Coalition  
 Bowdoin Street Health Center  
 Cambridge City Council  
 Cambridge School Committee  
 Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood  
 Ctr. for Community Engagement, Williams College  
 Center for Informed Food Choices  
 Center for Science in the Public Interest  
 Chelsea Board of Health  
 Child Care Resource Center, Cambridge  
 Children's Hospital Boston  
 Citizens for Adequate Housing  
 Codman Square Health Center  
 Community Health Connections, Inc.  
 Dedham Board of Health  
 Diabetes Association, Inc.  
 Dorchester House Multi-Service Center  
 Duxbury Public Schools School Committee  
 Eliot School of Fine & Applied Arts  
 Erna Yaffe Foundation  
 Fairhaven Board of Health  
 Fall River Dept. of Health and Human Services  
 FoodPlay Productions  
 Food Bank of Western Massachusetts  
 Friedman School of Nutrition Science & Policy at Tufts University  
 Greater Boston Food Bank  
 Harvard Vanguard Associates  
 HealthFirst Family Care Center, Inc.  
 Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts  
 Healthy Malden, Inc.  
 Holyoke City Council  
 Holyoke Food & Fitness Policy Council  
 Holyoke Health Center  
 Holyoke Pediatric Associates  
 Holyoke Planning Network  
 Hub Comics  
 Immigrant Service Providers Group/Health  
 Kids Can Cook  
 Lawrence Public Schools, Nutrition Services  
 Live Well Springfield Initiative

Lynn Community Health Center  
 Manet Community Health Center  
 Marblehead Board of Health  
 Marion Board of Health  
 MA Assoc. of Health Plans  
 MA Assoc. for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance  
 MA Assoc. of Community Health Workers  
 MA Assoc. of Public Health Nurses  
 MA Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics  
 MA Coalition of Nurse Practitioners  
 MA Coalition of School Based Health Centers  
 MA Dental Hygienists Association  
 MA Dental Society  
 MA Dietetic Association  
 MA Health Council  
 MA Medical Society  
 MA Nurses Association  
 MA Nutrition Board  
 MA Organization of Nurse Executives  
 MA Public Health Association  
 MA Parent Teacher Association (PTA)  
 MA School Nurse Organization  
 MA School Physicians  
 MA Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children  
 MA Teachers Association  
 Marblehead Board of Health  
 Mattapoissett Board of Health  
 Meal Makeover Moms  
 Medford Public Schools  
 Merrimack Valley Food Bank, Inc.  
 MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation  
 Middlesex Community College  
 National Association of Social Workers  
 Needham Eat Well Be Fit Committee  
 New Bedford Health Department  
 New England Coalition for Health Promotion/Disease Prevention  
 New England Family Health Center  
 Oak Square YMCA  
 Occupational Health Connections  
 Our Bodies, Ourselves  
 Parents Against Junk Food  
 Partners for a Healthier Community  
 Performance Pediatrics  
 Project Bread-The Walk for Hunger  
 Randolph Board of Health  
 School Nutrition Association of MA  
 Shutesbury School Committee  
 South End Community Health Center  
 Springfield Partners for Community Action  
 Swampscott Board of Health  
 The Medical Foundation  
 Tapestry Health  
 Tufts Medical Center  
 Tufts University School of Medicine,

Division of Family Medicine  
 United Cerebral Palsy Association of Berkshire County  
 Western MA Center for Health Communities  
 Whitman Board of Health  
 Whittier Street Health Center  
 Women's Health Institute  
 Worcester City Council  
 YMCA of Greater Boston  
 YMCA of Greater Springfield  
 Thomas M. Menino, Mayor, City of Boston  
 Mitchell Rabkin, M.D., CEO Emeritus Beth Israel Hosp. & Care Group; Professor of Medicine, Harvard Med. School  
 Michael Rosenblatt, MD, Dean, Tufts School of Medicine  
 John Tobin, Boston City Councillor

**Chief Sponsor**

Representative Peter Koutoujian

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 Representative Steven M. Walsh  
 Representative Martha M. Walz  
 Senator Edward M. Augustus Jr.  
 Senator Brian A. Joyce

**YES! I SUPPORT H. 4376, AN ACT TO PROMOTE PROPER SCHOOL NUTRITION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**My organization endorses *An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition*.**

**I endorse *An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition*.**

**Please check ALL that apply:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ I can recruit other supporters of H. 4376..
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to call my legislators to ask them to support H. 4376.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to meet with my legislators to urge them to support H. 4376.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to submit a letter to the editor of my local paper in support of H.4376.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will contact my school committee members about H. 4376.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will contact my local town council/board of selectmen about H. 4376.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will contact my local board of health about H. 4376.