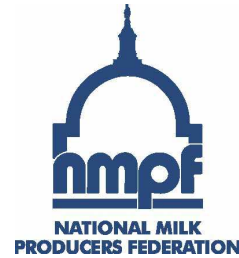




International Dairy Foods Association
Milk Industry Foundation
National Cheese Institute
International Ice Cream Association



September 23, 2010

Chairman George Miller
Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Ranking Member John Kline
Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Chairman Miller and Ranking Member Kline:

The International Dairy Foods Association¹ and the National Milk Producers Federation² support passage of S. 3307, the "Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010" in the U.S. House of Representatives. As you know, we also support, H.R. 5504, the "Improving Nutrition for America's Children Act". Both bills recognize the nutritional importance of dairy products for school-age children and ensure that schools offer low-fat and nonfat milk varieties that align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Dairy products are nutrient rich and milk provides nine essential nutrients, including three of the five nutrients identified as "nutrients of concern" for children in the *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* – calcium, magnesium and potassium. Milk is the number one source of calcium, magnesium, potassium and phosphorus in children's diets. In discussions by the 2010 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, calcium, phosphorous, magnesium and vitamins A, C and E have been identified as shortfall nutrients in the diets of American children.

Despite the clear health benefits of milk, children and adolescents are drinking less milk – a troubling trend that's been identified as one potential reason for chronic calcium shortages and the rising rates of obesity among America's youth. Research has found that the consumption rate among children declines most rapidly as children reach their teenage years.

With less than half of U.S. school age children participating in the school meal program and a majority of schools still allowing soft drinks, fruit drinks and sports drinks on the school campus, the decline in milk consumption may continue. We would like to continue to work with your committee to address this issue. As you know, schools that qualify for USDA's Healthier U.S. School Challenge program can only serve milk, water, and 100% juice on the school campus and we strongly support USDA's effort to get more schools enrolled in this initiative.

IDFA and NMPF recognize the challenge facing the Committee in reauthorizing the Child Nutrition Act and we strongly support your efforts to enact legislation before expiration of the programs on September 30, 2010.

Sincerely,



Connie Tipton
President and CEO
International Dairy Foods Association



Jerry Kozak
President and CEO
National Milk Producers Federation

cc: House Education and Labor Committee membership

¹ IDFA represents the nation's dairy manufacturing and marketing industries and their suppliers, with a membership of 550 companies representing a \$110-billion a year industry. IDFA is composed of three constituent organizations: the Milk Industry Foundation (MIF), the National Cheese Institute (NCI) and the International Ice Cream Association (IICA). IDFA's 220 dairy processing members run more than 600 plant operations, and range from large multi-national organizations to single-plant companies. Together they represent more than 85% of the milk, cultured products, cheese and frozen desserts produced and marketed in the United States.

² The National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF), based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance the well-being of U.S. dairy producers and the cooperatives they collectively own. The members of NMPF's 31 cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of nearly 40,000 dairy producers of Capital Hill and with government agencies.