

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 15, 2016

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Burwell,

I write to urge the Administration to expedite its review of and finalize the guidance implementing menu labeling requirements included in the Affordable Care Act (“A Labeling Guide for Restaurants and Retail Establishments Selling Away-From-Home Foods – Part II”). These requirements will ensure that restaurants and other retail food establishments provide adequate, clear information to support consumers in choosing healthy food options.

With more than one-third of adults in the United States obese today, it is imperative that consumers have as many resources as possible to make food selections that support their health. Poor nutrition contributes to the risk of obesity, which is in turn associated with numerous other serious chronic illnesses including cardiovascular disease, type-2 diabetes, certain cancers, osteoarthritis, and depression. These conditions have a devastating impact on our children and families. According to the American Heart Association, today’s children may be the first generation in United States history to lead shorter and less healthy lives than their parents.

Numerous studies show that providing nutrition information at restaurants can help Americans make lower-calorie dining choices. Restaurants and other retail food establishments have a major impact on Americans’ diets – Americans consume an average of one-third of their total calories while dining out. For these reasons, leading health organizations, including the American Medical Association and the American Heart/Stroke Association, support providing calorie information in restaurant menus.

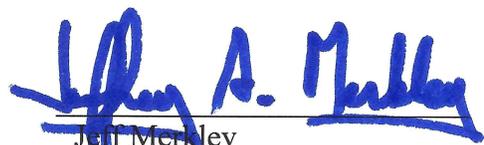
Restaurants and other food service establishments need this guidance to move forward with providing consumers with access to clear, understandable calorie information on their food items.

Given these circumstances, I urge the Administration to finalize its guidance as soon as possible to give consumers access to the nutritional information they seek. Thank you for helping consumers access clear information about their food.

Sincerely,



Patty Murray
United States Senator



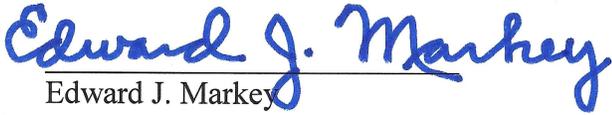
Jen Merkley
United States Senator



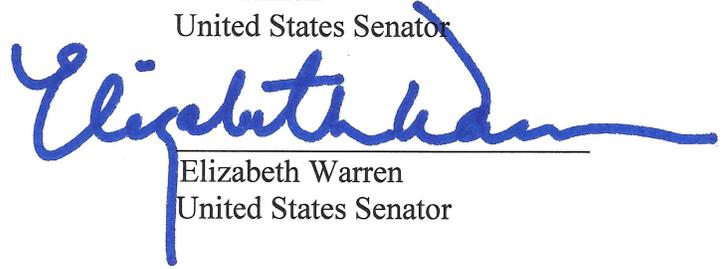
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



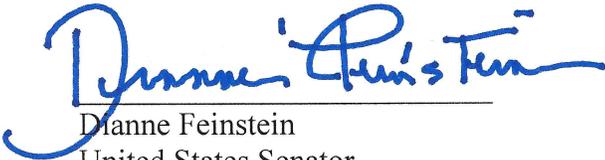
Al Franken
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Cc: Robert M. Califf, Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration