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Since the 2007 Legislative Session opened in January, Community Health Partnership: Oregon's Public Health Institute (CHP) has kept a furious pace with a full legislative agenda. This long-overdue issue of Partnership Notes will focus on the success and progress to date of CHP's advocacy efforts for 2007.

Legislators Say "NO" to Junk Food in Our Schools

Community Health Partnership, leading the charge with the Oregon Nutrition Policy Alliance, achieved its primary goal for the 2007 session: passing House Bill 2650. HB 2650 establishes statewide nutrition standards for all foods sold in vending machines, student stores, and the a la carte line in school cafeterias. The bill sailed through the House and Senate and was signed into law by Governor Kulongoski on June 20, 2007.

The new law removes the worst junk food from schools so that all of Oregon's students have consistent access to healthier food choices. Lawmakers were swayed by the obvious obesity problem, a groundswell of public support, and recognition that foods in schools were due for an overhaul. Legislators also commented on the need to align the food sold with what schools teach about good nutrition.

The work of CHP and other Oregon Nutrition Policy Alliance members in 2005 laid the groundwork for the 2007 session. We also benefited from the expertise of professional lobbyists from the Oregon Nurses Association, Stand for Children, and the American Diabetes Association guiding our campaign. We give special thanks to our legislative champions Representative Tina Kotek (D-Portland), Representative Scott Bruun (R-West Linn), Senator Bill Morrisette (D-Springfield), and Senator Joanne Verger (D-Coos Bay).

Never idle, CHP expects to stay involved and lend support to schools as the new nutrition standards are implemented. "Now we look forward to partnering with schools, vendors, and food manufacturers to ensure meaningful implementation of these nutrition standards," said Mary Lou Hennrich, Executive Director, CHP.

Good News for Nursing Mothers and Children

Another step toward preventing childhood obesity came in the overwhelming passage of House Bill 2372, which requires businesses of 25 or more employees to provide unpaid break time as well as a private place for nursing mothers to pump.

The health benefits of breastfeeding, including reduced risk for obesity, diabetes, ear infections, severe diarrhea, respiratory illness and even infant mortality, are well documented. However, numerous studies have shown that when women return to work, they are less likely to continue to breastfeed due to several barriers: not having a place to pump, lack of support by the employer or having an inflexible work schedule. HB 2372 makes it easier for women who want to continue breastfeeding to do so on the job.

On the surface, the bill may seem like a win for mothers, but a "loss" for businesses. Surprisingly, companies with

breastfeeding support programs actually report increased cost-savings and reduced absenteeism, not to mention higher employee morale and improved worker productivity.

CHP played a role in the success of this bill through expert consultation to the Nursing Mothers Counsel of Oregon Legislative Committee, testimony from CHP and other public health advocates, and by aiding with printing of materials and generating media coverage.

Governor Kulongoski signed this bill into law on May 17, 2007. Let's celebrate this huge milestone for the health of Oregon mothers and babies!

Basic Elements of HB 2650

By 2008 school year:

- Total calories from fat may not exceed 35% (except for nuts, eggs, cheese, nonfried vegetables, legumes and seeds.)
- Sugar content may not exceed 35% by weight, except for fruits and vegetables.
- Saturated fat may not exceed 10%.
- Trans fat may not exceed 0.5 grams in snacks.
- Calorie limits for snacks—150 in elementary school, 180 in middle school, 200 in high school.
- Beverages—only water, milk, fruit or vegetable juice for elementary and middle school. High schools may also sell diet sodas.

By 2009 school year:

- A la carte entrees—less than 450 calories and less than 36% fat



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Fluoridated Drinking Water: Have You Read the Science?

Perhaps the most controversial bill this session is House Bill 3099 - requiring water suppliers to fluoridate the water supply for populations over 10,000. There is no argument about whether fluoride prevents tooth decay and saves tax dollars, yet there is plenty of argument about how to interpret the scientific data regarding fluoridated water. The question most frequently asked by proponents and opponents alike is: "have you read the science?" Despite the fact that the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention calls fluoridation one of the 10 most important public health advances of the 20th century, Oregon ranks 48th out of 50 states in supplying its citizens with fluoridated water. With the public health benefits far outweighing the alleged cons, CHP endorses community water fluoridation. At this writing, HB 3099 is awaiting a vote in the Ways and Means Subcommittee on General Government. We will continue to direct our advocacy support to this vital issue to improve the oral health of all Oregonians.



Farm-to-School: Say "YES" to Healthy Foods in Our Schools

A groundbreaking bill that combines increased funding for school nutrition programs with promoting Oregon products and business, House Bill 3476, awaits further action in the Joint Ways and Means Committee. The bill, sponsored by Representative Tina Kotek (D-Portland), allocates state funding for school nutrition programs to purchase Oregon agricultural products. Oregon is among the few states that do not contribute state general funds to support implementation of the National School Lunch and Breakfast programs. Now that we have accomplished getting the worst foods out of our schools, CHP will direct our advocacy support to assuring that schools have the resources to purchase healthy food grown in Oregon.

Partnership Notes



Call for Nominations: Public Health Genius Awards

Recognize and honor outstanding Oregonians who are working to improve the public's health.

Nominate a colleague who has demonstrated creativity, risk-taking and boldness in forging collaborative solutions to public health problems.

Nominations are due by **August 1, 2007** and awards will be presented at the Annual Genius Award Luncheon. Please see our website for nominations criteria, tickets, sponsorship and more information.

SAVE THE DATE!!!!

2007 Genius Awards Luncheon

This year's Public Health Genius Awards Luncheon will take place **October 23, 2007.**



Yes, I'll support Community Health Partnership. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation to improve the health of Oregonians through support of public health.

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Community Health Partnership

Community Health Partnership's mission is to improve the health of Oregonians through advocacy and support of effective public health policy and activities.

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