

November 16, 2015

Catherine Woteki, Ph.D.
Chief Scientist
Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 214W, Whitten Building
Washington, D.C. 20250-0110

Karen B. DeSalvo, M.D., M.P.H., M.Sc.
Acting Assistant Secretary for Health
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 716G
Washington, DC 20201

Re: Updating the Dietary Reference Intake (DRI) Values

Dear Drs. Woteki and DeSalvo,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and institutions we are writing to seek your assistance in updating Dietary Reference Intake (DRIs) values to reflect the best evidence currently available.

DRIs are nutrient specific reference values set by Expert Committees of the Institute of Medicine's Food and Nutrition Board (FNB). These values provide key benchmarks for the U.S. and Canada by describing quantitative relationships between nutrient intakes and indicators of adequacy, prevention of disease, and avoidance of excessive intakes among healthy populations. As such, they support many federal food and nutrition programs, policies, and regulatory initiatives, and thus are critical to a significant portion of both countries' GDP. For example, these nutrient values, along with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, are the statutory basis for government nutrition assistance programs such as The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, and Elderly Nutrition Program. These programs have broad impact. WIC, for example, serves 53 percent of all infants born in the U.S. The DRIs are also used as a guide by many health professionals to provide preventive services and clinical inpatient and outpatient care. Increased recognition of the importance of diet to health throughout the life cycle and the growing domestic and global burden of diet-related chronic disease underscore the urgent need to update these values.

Many of the current DRIs were last reviewed almost twenty years ago, and some no longer reflect present day science. Calcium and vitamin D are the sole exceptions; the evidence showing the relationship of these nutrients to health was updated in 2010. Keeping nutrient recommendations current and based on the latest science is critical to the health of our nation. In order to maintain the relevancy of federal nutrition policies and programs, and assure the best

dietary guidance to the public and the broader food and agricultural sectors, it is important to establish an ongoing evidence-based process that will identify nutrients in need of review and, depending on the review outcome, updated DRI values.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. Please don't hesitate to contact Sarah Ohlhorst, MS, RD, ASN Director of Government Relations, at sohlhorst@nutrition.org or 301.634.7281, should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Advocates for Responsible Care

Alliance for Aging Research

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Gastroenterological Association

American Public Health Association

American Society for Nutrition

Center for Science in the Public Interest

Council for Responsible Nutrition

Elder Care Advocacy of Florida

Endocrine Society

George Mason University Department of Nutrition and Food Studies

Harvard Medical School

Healthcare Nutrition Council

Infant Nutrition Council of America

Institute of Food Technologists

Lupus and Allied Diseases Association

Lupus Foundation of Arkansas, Inc.

Lupus Foundation of Florida, Inc.

National CACFP Sponsors Association

National Osteoporosis Foundation

National WIC Association

North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition

Purdue University Department of Nutrition Science

Shape Up America!

Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior

Sumner M. Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness, George Washington University

The Obesity Society

U.S. Pain Foundation

Veterans Health Council of Vietnam Veterans of America

Virginia Commonwealth University

CC: Ann Yaktine, Ph.D., Director, Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences

Cutberto Garza, M.D., Chair, Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences