

December 3, 2018

Senate of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario,
Canada K1A 0A4

Dear Senator,

We at **Dietitians of Canada** write to you today asking for your support in ensuring that **Bill S-228** is prioritized, to be voted on before the Senate adjourns for the holidays.

Dietitians of Canada is the professional association for registered dietitians and the leading voice for Canadian dietitians at the local, provincial and national level. We are a proud member of the Stop Marketing to Kids Coalition <https://stopmarketingtokids.ca/>, which consists of 12 organizations working together to support the federal government's efforts to restrict the marketing of unhealthy food and beverages to children in Canada.

We encourage you, our nation's Senators, to continue to support, and pass Bill S-228. This important piece of legislation has been thoroughly studied in the Senate over the past two years and passed by the House of Commons in September 2018. As you know, prohibiting advertising of foods and beverages to children was the second recommendation in the 2016 study report of the Social Affairs, Science and Technology Committee on [Obesity in Canada](#).

Please do not allow further delay in passing Bill S-228. In response to some recent, unfounded concerns, we reassure you that:

- Bill S-228 Legislation has nothing to do with front-of-package labelling; these are two different initiatives that are not really connected.
- Sponsorship of kids' community sports will not be impacted by Bill S-228. The government has clearly announced that kids' sports sponsorships will be exempted from regulations.
- "Unhealthy" foods cannot be defined in the legislation, hence the prescriptive details must be devolved to the regulatory process. Dietitians, as food and nutrition experts and public health stakeholders, are committed to providing evidence-based input for regulatory consultation.

Since the 1980's, Quebec has had legislation for some restricted marketing to kids, which was even further affirmed after a Supreme Court challenge; evidence demonstrates the positive impacts on children's health in that Province. Quebec stakeholders welcome the broader protection offered by S-228 addressing advertising beyond television. The protection that will come with this legislation is long

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overdue - we very much appreciate the work of your former colleague, Nancy Greene Raine, who initiated this proposed legislation.

Bill S-228 is based on scientific evidence and mirrors countless recommendations worldwide. Restricted marketing to children is a recognized best practice by the World Health Organization, as a public health approach to reduce the high prevalence of diet-related diseases, and related expenses within the health care system and to society at large. It is critical to protect children's health, as part of a multi-component, upstream strategy included within the Health Eating Strategy for Canada. Children deserve to be protected from marketing of unhealthy food and beverages and their parents need support in their efforts to create healthy eating environments.

With unhealthy diet being the leading risk factor for death in Canada and with costs exceeding \$26 billion per year, we need this Bill to be passed without further delay. Follow-up steps can then proceed to begin consultation on food regulations via Canada Gazette 1. Self-regulation mechanisms by industry have been insufficient - industry has targeted children with unhealthy food and beverage advertising at an increasing and alarming rate and mandatory measures are now required.

Children's health has waited long enough. Dietitians of Canada urges the Senate to approve final passage of Bill S-228, recognizing your opportunity and duty to positively impact the health of children across all of Canada and to help turn the tide on the very costly and rising incidence of diet-related chronic disease in our population.

We would be happy to arrange a time for discussion for any Senator who has questions about this communication. Thank you for your time and commitment, supporting the protection of the health and wellbeing of Canada's children.

Sincerely,



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