



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

MEMORANDUM

To: All House Members
From: Representative Brendan F. Boyle
Date: April 7, 2011
Re: Cosponsorship Memo - Menu Labeling

Dear Colleague,

As you know, our society is dealing with an obesity epidemic. The financial cost of this epidemic is enormous, and is increasing with every year. Studies show that the dramatic increase in our obesity rate, particularly among children, is a major contributing factor to our escalating health costs.

Some policymakers advocate for banning certain fatty foods. Indeed, some municipalities have chosen to follow this path. I strongly disagree with this approach. If I want to eat a cheesesteak (or a Primanti Bros sandwich), then I have the right to do so. However, as a consumer, I should also have information at my disposal so I can make an informed choice.

Accordingly, I plan to introduce legislation that would require chain restaurants and retail food establishments to post nutritional information on their menus. My legislation would apply to restaurants with more than 15 locations locally and nationwide. This legislation would apply to menus at sit-down restaurants as well as menu boards within fast food establishments.

This legislation would specifically require that the total number of calories, grams of saturated fats, grams of trans fat, grams of carbohydrates, and milligrams of sodium be printed for every standard menu item on restaurant menus. Additionally, this information would be required to be printed for every standard menu item posted on menu boards and food tags.

Similar legislation was enacted within the city of Philadelphia a couple years and it has been well received. It is intended to help consumers make informed nutritional choices, since many consumers are not aware of the actual nutritional content of the items they purchase when dining out. It is my sincere hope that if provided with the nutritional content, Pennsylvanians will be able to make decisions that can lead to a healthier lifestyle.

If you would like to cosponsor this measure, please contact Kristen Womelsdorf at 717-787-3055 or kwomelsd@pahouse.net.

Thanks,
Brendan