

Hon. Tony Clement  
Minister's Office - Health Canada  
Brooke Claxton Building, Tunney's Pasture  
Postal Locator: 0906C  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada  
K1A 0K9

10/31/2007

Honourable Minister,

**Re. alPHa Resolution A07-2, Childhood obesity and Trans Fats**

---

On behalf of member Medical Officers of Health, Boards of Health and Affiliate organizations of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa), I am writing today to introduce alPHa Resolution A07-2, Childhood Obesity and Trans Fats, for anticipated follow-up and action by your ministry.

Research has demonstrated a strong link between trans fats and increased risk of heart disease. It is also known that the most significant source of trans-fats in Canadians' diets is calorie-dense, processed foods with little nutritional value. We believe that governments and industry alike have a responsibility to act on the recommendations contained in the Commons Standing Committee on Health *Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids* report and the *Trans Fat Task Force Report* to address the fact that obesity and overweight rates in children and adolescents have doubled over the last two decades.

We appreciate your recent announcements encouraging the food industry to voluntarily reduce the proportions of trans fats in their products, but would strongly encourage you to begin the process of implementing binding legislation to require it. We are also urging your Ministry to make public reports on the progress of the reduction of trans fats in our food supply a part of Health Canada's monitoring activities. We look forward to further commitments from your Ministry in support of the recommendations contained in the above-named reports.

We welcome any opportunity to speak with you further about these issues, and as always, look forward to opportunities in assisting in addressing them. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

*ORIGINAL SIGNED*

Linda Stewart,  
Executive Director

**Copy:** Rt. Hon Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada  
Hon. Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance  
Hon. Josee Verner, Minister of Canadian Heritage, Status of Women and Official  
Languages  
Hon. Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development  
Hon. Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities  
Dr. David Butler-Jones, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada  
Hon. Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario  
Hon. Deb Matthews, Minister of Children and Youth Services  
Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Education  
Hon. Dwight Duncan, Minister of Finance  
Hon. George Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care  
Hon. Margaret Best, Minister of Health Promotion  
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health (Acting)

## **alPHa RESOLUTION A07-2**

**TITLE:** Childhood Obesity and Trans Fats

**SPONSOR:** Durham Regional Council

**WHEREAS** from 1978 to 2004, overweight/obesity rates doubled from 13% to 26% for children aged 6 to 11 years and from 14% to 29% for adolescents aged 12 to 17 years; and

**WHEREAS** 55% of First Nations children and 41% of Aboriginal children and adolescents living off-reserve are either overweight or obese; and

**WHEREAS** there is a major gap between the reality and the perception of Canadian parents about the weight of their children; and

**WHEREAS** as the overweight children of today become tomorrow's obese adults, the burden on the health care and social systems is expected to increase; and

**WHEREAS** obesity costs Canada about \$1.6 billion annually in direct health care costs, or 2.4% of total health care spending; and

**WHEREAS** obesity costs Canada about \$2.7 billion in indirect costs including lost productivity, disability insurance, reduced quality of life and mental health problems due to stigmatization and poor self-esteem; and

**WHEREAS** the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health has studied this matter and released its report and recommendations "*Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids*" in March 2007; and

**WHEREAS** Health Canada's multi-stakeholder Trans Fat Task Force studied the trans fat component of Canada's obesity epidemic and released its report and recommendations in June 2006;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** alPHa urges the Government of Canada to respond to "*Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids*" and the Trans Fat Task Force reports and implement their recommendations as quickly as possible.