

Hon. David Caplan  
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care  
10th Flr, Hepburn Block  
80 Grosvenor St  
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

Hon. Kathleen Wynne  
Minister of Education  
Mowat Block  
22nd Flr  
900 Bay St  
Toronto ON M7A1L2

08/10/09

Honourable Ministers,

**Re.   alPHa Resolution A09-4, Trans Fat in the Food Supply**

---

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 A09-4, Trans Fat in the Food Supply, for anticipated follow-up and action by your ministries.

The evidence linking trans-fats and a range of negative health outcomes is well established, including demonstrations that they significantly increase the risk of heart disease and Type 2 Diabetes. We believe that governments and industry alike have a responsibility to act on recommendations such as those contained in the *Trans Fat Task Force Report* to address the significant likelihood of trans-fats' contribution to preventable deaths and disease.

We recognize that the Ontario Government has taken important steps to address the risks of trans-fat in the food supply, most notably by passing the Healthy Foods for Healthy Schools Act and beginning debate on Bill 156, Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating. We are encouraging you to modify the former to extend trans-fat limitations to foods provided and not just sold in schools. We are also encouraging you to support the provisions of Bill 156, including regulating trans-fat in food service premises. Similar regulation has proven very successful in other jurisdictions, most notably in New York City.

We have written separately to the Federal Minister of Health urging her to move forward on regulating the amount of trans-fat available in the Canadian food supply. We wish to emphasize that action on this issue demands action from all levels of government and industry alike, and we look forward to your response and action on the items that fall within your respective portfolios.

Yours truly,

*ORIGINAL SIGNED*

Linda Stewart,  
Executive Director

**Copy:** Dr. David Butler-Jones, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada  
Hon. Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario  
Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Ontario Minister of Education  
Hon. David Caplan, Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term Care  
Hon. Margaret Best, Ontario Minister of Health Promotion  
Dr. Arlene King, Chief Medical Officer of Health (Ontario)  
Ontario Boards of Health

## **aPHa RESOLUTION A09-4**

**TITLE:**           **Trans Fat in the Food Supply**

**SPONSOR:**       **Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit**

**WHEREAS**       The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that people consume no more than 1% of total calories from trans fat or approximately 2 grams trans fat per day in 2000 calories<sup>1</sup>;

**WHEREAS**       The average consumption in Canada is 4.9grams per day, two-and-a-half times the WHO limit, and some boys (5%) aged 6-18 consume 11.6 grams per day<sup>2</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**       Studies have found that for every two per cent of calories coming from trans fat, the risk of coronary artery disease increases by 23 per cent<sup>3,4</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**       the leading cause of death in Ontario is cardiovascular disease<sup>5</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**       In 2006 Federal Trans Fat Task Force provided recommendations to the federal Minister of Health on how to reduce trans fat intake in Canadians' diet; and

**WHEREAS**       On June 20, 2007, the Federal Minister of Health gave food industry two years to achieve the trans fat limits specified by the Federal Task force; and

**WHEREAS**       In 2006 and 2007 several Ontario Boards of Health, as well as the Association of Local Public Health Agencies endorsed the recommendations of the Trans Fat Task Force (2006) and urged the Federal Government to regulate trans fat in the Canadian food supply; and

**WHEREAS**       Health Canada's February 2009 survey of trans fat levels in the Canadian food supply<sup>6</sup> shows continued high levels of trans fat in noodles, crackers, cookies, donuts, pies and other snacks and baked goods. Of the 517 grocery and fast food products examined, nearly one-quarter (117) still fail to meet the limits accepted by former Federal Minister of Health, Tony Clement; and

**WHEREAS**       Some Canadian provinces and municipalities have recently taken steps to regulate the level of trans fat in the food supply;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aPHa) urge the Federal Minister of Health to take immediate steps to amend the Food and Drug Act or regulations to restrict the levels of synthetic trans fat permitted in foods to the limits recommended by the Federal Trans Fat Task Force (2006);

**AND FURTHER** that aPHa urge the Government of Ontario to take immediate steps towards regulating trans fat levels in foods and beverages available in Ontario food premises, including, but not limited to, supporting Bill 156 Healthy Decisions for Healthy Foods

**AND FURTHER** that aPHa urge the Government of Ontario to, in keeping with recent measures taken by the Government of British Columbia, take immediate steps towards regulating trans fat levels in foods and beverages available in Ontario foodservice operations;

**AND FURTHER** that alPHa urge the Government of Ontario to expand the trans fat regulations of Bill 8 Healthy Foods for Healthy Schools to include all foods available or provided (not just sold) by Ontario schools;

**AND FURTHER** that alPHa urge Ontario boards of health and municipalities to consider taking actions to regulate trans fat served in local food premises such as has been done in the cities of Calgary, Montreal and Toronto;

**AND FURTHER** that alPHa urge the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, and all local boards of health to take actions towards regulating trans fat in the food supply within their jurisdiction.

#### **ACTION FROM CONFERENCE:**

Moved: J. Pfaff (Simcoe Muskoka)  
Seconded: G. Chartrand (Porcupine)

#### **Resolution CARRIED**

#### **References:**

<sup>1</sup> Health Canada. TRANSforming the Food Supply. Report of the Trans Fat Task Force Submitted to the Minister of Health. June 2006.

<sup>2</sup>Health Canada. TRANSforming the Food Supply. Report of the Trans Fat Task Force Submitted to the Minister of Health. June 2006

<sup>3</sup>Mozaffarian D., Katan MB., Ascherio A., Stampfer, MJ., Willet WC. Trans Fatty Acids and Cardiovascular Disease. New Eng J Med 2006;354:1601-13.

<sup>4</sup> Health Canada. TRANSforming the Food Supply. Report of the Trans Fat Task Force Submitted to the Minister of Health. June 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Ontario MOHLTC. Mortality Data 2000-2004, Provincial Health Planning Database (PHPDB) Extracted July, 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Health Canada. February, 2009. Accessed Online March 24, 2009 at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/gras-trans-fats/tfa-age3-eng.php#results>.