



**Legislative &
Information Services**

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TOWN OF AJAX

65 Harwood Avenue South
Ajax ON L1S 2H9
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And

RECEIVED

MAY 07 2008

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May 6, 2008

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Honourable Tony Clement
Minister of Health
916C Brooke Claxton Building, 16th Floor
Tunney's Pasture
Ottawa ON
K1A 0K9

RE: Ban to prohibit the commercial advertising of food and beverages to children less than thirteen years of age.

At its meeting on April 28, 2008 the Council of the Town of Ajax passed the following resolution to prohibit the commercial advertising of food and beverages to children less than thirteen years of age and respectfully requests you afford this resolution your full consideration and endorsement.

WHEREAS Statistics Canada estimates that one third of children between two and eleven years of age are overweight and that about half of these children are considered obese; and

WHEREAS poor diet during childhood has been linked to chronic diseases in adulthood; and

WHEREAS food and beverage advertising primarily promotes nutrient poor and calorie dense foods; and

WHEREAS in the US, for every public service announcement promoting physical activity young children see 27 television food ads; and

WHEREAS this generation of children are exposed to a much greater frequency and intensity of marketing messages to influence their dietary choices; and

WHEREAS US food companies spend about \$12 billion annually marketing to children and youth; and

WHEREAS for example, Quebec, Sweden and Norway prohibit commercial advertising to children;

WHEREAS the United Kingdom has banned ads for foods high in fat, sugar and salt associated with television programs that appeal to children under 16 years of age; and

WHEREAS a survey of GTA children found that 68 percent of children played "advergames" on company websites; and

WHEREAS food and beverage advertising in Canada is self-regulated by industry through Advertising Standards Canada; and

WHEREAS self-regulation has substantial shortcomings with respect to advertising code content, enforcement and penalties as regards the public health concerns related to children's and youth marketing; and

WHEREAS the Canadian government recognizes the importance of tackling Canada's children and youth obesity epidemic by, for example, the Canadian government implementing the Public Health Agency of Canada's Healthy Living, SummerActive and WinterActive strategies; and

WHEREAS the Ontario government also recognizes the importance of tackling this epidemic by, for example, implementing the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion's Active 2020 and Healthy Eating and Active Living strategies and sponsoring Bill 8, the Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act, 2008; and


WHEREAS the Toronto Board of Health has passed a resolution urging Health Canada, Industry Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services to prohibit all commercial advertising of food and beverages to children under thirteen years of age;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Ajax urges the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario to prohibit all commercial advertising of food and beverages to children less than thirteen years of age; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prime Minister of Canada, Ministers of Health Canada and Industry Canada, Regional Municipality of Durham, Durham's MPs, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, Premier of Ontario, Ministers of Children and Youth Services, Government and Consumer Services, Health and Long- Term Care, and Health Promotion, Durham's MPPs and municipalities, Acting Chief Medical Officer of Health, alPHa, OPHA, Advertising Standards Canada, school board associations, teachers federations, and all Ontario Boards of Health are so advised.

We trust this matter will receive your office's full attention and support.

Sincerely,



Blair Labelle
Manager of Legislative Services/Deputy Clerk
Town of Ajax
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Copy: Minister of Industry Canada
Regional Municipality of Durham
Region of Durham MP's and MPP's
Chief Public Health Officer
Premier of Ontario
Minister of Children and Youth Services
Minister of Government and Consumer Services
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Minister of Health Promotion
All Municipalities of Durham
~~Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA)~~
Ontario Public Health Association
Advertising Standards Canada
Ontario Public School Board Association
Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association
Regional Councillor C Jordan