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## Reasons to Offer Healthier Food and Beverage Options In Public Places and Programs

- 1. Ensure access to healthier options and help to create more supportive food environments** for government employees, visitors to public property, participants in government-sponsored programs, and people in government institutional environments.
- 2. Support employees' ability to eat healthfully.** Studies show a strong relationship between the workplace environment and the health behaviors of employees.
- 3. Increase demand for healthier options.** State and local jurisdictions are large purchasers of food. Directing their food dollars towards healthful options drives demand for healthier products and spurs companies to reformulate their products.
- 4. Reduce health care costs.** Offering healthier options in public places could decrease the economic burden of obesity and diet-related chronic diseases, which cost \$190 billion a year—half of which is paid by taxpayers through Medicaid and Medicare.
- 5. Increase American competitiveness.** American competitiveness is reduced when diet-related diseases reduce worker productivity.
- 6. Model and reinforce other nutrition and obesity prevention efforts by state and local governments.** Most state and many local governments implement obesity and chronic disease prevention programs. Those programs are undermined and contradicted by selling unhealthy foods on public property or serving them through government-sponsored programs.
- 7. Give people what they want.** People want healthier options and generally are trying to eat healthier. A study of healthy vending in Chicago parks showed that 88% of visitors were satisfied with the healthier vending options. A Snack Food Association survey revealed that three-fourths of consumers are trying to eat healthier and two-thirds are eating specific foods to lose weight.
- 8. Reduce obesity and diet-related chronic diseases.** Obesity and poor nutrition are contributing to high rates of heart disease, diabetes, and other diet-related chronic diseases, which diminish Americans' quality of life. Diet-related diseases are leading causes of disabilities. For example, nationally, 12,000 to 24,000 people with diabetes become blind each year.
- 9. Join the Movement.** States from Tennessee to California and localities from Hernando, MS to New York City have implemented policies to improve the food and beverage offerings on public property and through their programs. These policies are being implemented in a variety of venues, from vending in health department facilities to all food provided in parks and recreation department facilities to all government property and programs. This is a low-cost strategy to address nutrition and obesity. All states and localities across the country should adopt policies for healthier food choices on public property.

In addition to the millions of Americans that visit public property daily and participate in government-sponsored programs, 17 million people work for state and local governments.

**"Providing exclusively healthier options in vending machines is not only a responsible business practice, but a lucrative one."**

*Sean Kelly, CEO & Co-Founder of HUMAN Healthy Vending*

**Job absenteeism caused by diet-related diseases costs business \$4.3 billion annually in the U.S.**

