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California State Senate

SENATOR
TOM TORLAKSON
SEVENTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT



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October 9, 2003

Amanda Purcell, MPH
Program Manager
Public Health Institute
1401 21st Street, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Ms. Purcell:

I am writing to thank you, and to commend the work of the Public Health Institute, for the valuable research on soda and snack food in schools. The 2002 study "Prevalence and Specifics of District-wide Beverage Contracts in California's Largest School Districts" provided valuable information and framed the basis for legislation and policy changes to address the childhood obesity epidemic.

The work of the Public Health Institute was critical to the development of SB 65, my bill to require open contracts and public review of soda and junk food contracts, which was recently signed by the Governor. Schools, parents, students and community members will also greatly benefit from "Successful Students Through Healthy Food Policies—Act Now For Academic Excellence, Healthy Food Policy Guide" produced by California Project LEAN and the California School Boards Association. This effort will make healthy food choices a more likely option for all schools.

Our continued work to bring attention to the full costs of the childhood obesity epidemic and the need to improve nutrition and fitness has moved into the public dialogue with increased media attention and legislative action. I look forward to continued work with the Public Health Institute and others helping to highlight this challenge and make the changes necessary in schools and communities for improved health.

Thank you again for your work. Please continue to be in touch with me and my staff.

Sincerely,


Tom Torlakson