



November 16, 2009

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman HELP Committee
United States Senate
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Enzi
Ranking Member HELP Committee
United States Senate
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Chairman
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Joe Barton
Ranking Member
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Harkin and Waxman and Ranking Members Enzi and Barton:

Starbucks was founded almost 40 years ago as a company that believed it was possible to balance good business with uncompromising values. These values have never been as important as they are today, as our country faces a growing healthcare crisis.

As a long-time provider of comprehensive health care to full-time and eligible part-time employees, we have chosen to lend our voice and demonstrate our support for the need to enact meaningful healthcare reform this year. We have been on our own journey to offer healthier options since 2007, and have followed with great interest the health and wellness components of healthcare reform. We believe that some of what we learned can help inform the debate related to menu labeling.

We know Starbucks customers are health conscious and seek reliable nutritional information. Millions visit our website every month and more customers go to our nutritional information web page than any other page on our site. We have made nutrition information easier to find and understand, from brochures in our stores to our recently launched iPhone™ nutrition application which has quickly become one of the top ten most downloaded free applications on iTunes.

We were also one of the first in New York City to include calories on our menu board in compliance with Mayor Bloomberg's mandate. This program showed us first-hand that menu labeling can work to help consumers make choices. Based on our experience in New York City, San Francisco, Seattle and extensive customer feedback, we believe that a national menu labeling standard is an important component in helping customers make healthier food choices.

As a global business, we also know that implementing a national or global standard is costly and complex. From our perspective, the regulations and standards should be uniform to enable customers to consistently compare products and make informed choices. Not only is this necessary for consumers, it is also critical for multi-state retailers, as it is challenging and expensive to create city by city menu boards in order to satisfy

different rules and regulations around the country. Businesses need a level playing field so that they can compete fairly while supporting these important consumer health reforms.

As we continue our journey to provide healthier options and to educate our customers, we believe now is the time to lay the foundation and set expectations for significant impact. With this in mind, Starbucks urges Congress to enact an appropriate national menu labeling standard, which can be implemented in a practical way, as part of overall healthcare reform.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vivek Varma". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vivek Varma
Senior Vice President, Public Affairs
Starbucks Coffee Company

Attachments:
Starbucks Health and Wellness Timeline