April 9, 2013

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

RE: FNS -2011-0019

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

As elected leaders from Wisconsin, we write to express concerns with the cranberry and dairy portions of the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) rule proposal: "National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School as required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010."

The health benefits of cranberries are widely acknowledged, with cranberries being considered one of the best sources of vitamin C, fiber and disease fighting antioxidants. As leaders of the State that is the number one producer of cranberries in the United States, we ask that dried cranberries be exempt from the total sugars standard in the proposed rule *(page 33)*. Additionally, given the numerous health benefits of cranberries, we ask that cranberries not be minimized or eliminated from being served in schools *(page 6)*.

In addition to our concerns with the treatment of cranberries in the rule proposal, we have reservations with how dairy products would be regulated. Consuming dairy products is a critical part of a child's well-being. However, studies show most children do not meet the dietary recommendations for dairy consumption or get enough calcium. This proposed rule reduces the access children have to dairy, an easy calcium source, by limiting cheese and milk consumption.

Wisconsin is the number one cheese producer in the United States, and we find it unnecessary to only allow "reduced fat cheeses" that also meet the rule's trans-fat, calorie, sugar and sodium standards for all school meals and al a carte items *(pages 5, 31)*. Growing students need calcium and protein, and cheese remains an excellent and easy source of both.

We also are concerned about the milk limits in this rule. This rule only allows for milk alternatives, plain low-fat milk, plain fat-free milk and flavored fat-free milk to be offered in schools *(page 6)*. It does not allow for low-fat chocolate milk, low-fat strawberry milk, low-fat vanilla milk, any other low-fat flavored milk or whole milk to be served or purchased during the school day. We believe allowing flavored low-fat milks

would still be consistent with Section 202 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 as well as the Dietary Guidelines. Local schools districts should have the option to serve or sell these dairy products.

We appreciate your consideration of these comments as we all strive to improve the well-being of our nation's children.

Sincerely,

Scott Walker
Governor of Wisconsin

Reid Ribble
Member of Congress

Ron Johnson
U.S. Senator

Sean Duffy
Member of Congress

Ron Kind
Member of Congress

Mark Pocan
Member of Congress

Tom Petri
Member of Congress

Paul Ryan
Member of Congress

Tammy Baldwin
U.S. Senator