



## HOUSE BILL 727

### Food Service Facilities - Artificial Trans Fat - Prohibition

February 23, 2010

**POSITION: Oppose unless amended**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee:

On behalf of the members of the *Restaurant Association of Maryland*, we oppose House Bill 727 unless the sponsor agrees to amend the bill to preempt more stringent ordinances at the local level and remove the exemption for packaged goods.

The restaurant industry strongly supports phasing out the use of artificial trans fats (products containing more than 0.5 gram of trans fats per serving) in the foods we serve. In fact, most restaurants have already eliminated trans fat from frying oil and are currently securing trans fat-free alternatives for baked goods, prepared batters and other products. However, this legislation, as currently drafted, ignores a significant number of food products that still contain trans fat.

We do not understand why the scope of this legislation does not include packaged foods served at restaurants or sold at retail stores. There are many packaged goods that contain more than 0.5 gram of trans fat per serving. Moreover, children have much greater access to these products on a daily basis than restaurant foods. If the true goal is to improve public health for citizens of all ages, then focusing solely on foodservice establishments seems shortsighted and unfair.

On the issue of preempting more stringent trans fat ordinances at the local level, any statewide bill on this issue should create a uniform standard that is enforced consistently throughout the state.

Unless this bill is amended in the manner we describe, we are forced to oppose HB 727 and request an unfavorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

Melvin R. Thompson  
Senior Vice President  
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