



March 8, 2010

Chairman Peter A. Hammen
Health & Government Operations Committee
Lowe House Office Building, Rm. 241
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: House Bill 727 - *Food Service Facilities - Artificial Trans Fat - Prohibition*

Dear Chairman Hammen:

On behalf of the *Restaurant Association of Maryland*, I am writing to express support for House Bill 727.

As you know, we had previously opposed this legislation because, as introduced, the bill did not sufficiently preempt local trans fat regulations or ordinances. Moreover, the original version of the bill did not apply to packaged foods.

We have successfully worked with the bill sponsor, Delegate James Hubbard, on amendments to address our concerns. As a result, the bill now preempts local trans fat regulations or ordinances (except for the existing regulation and ordinance in Montgomery County and Baltimore City). The legislation will also apply to packaged foods after July 1, 2012. We also clarified language to insure that the bill applies to food that is "served or sold."

As a result of these changes, we withdraw our opposition to House Bill 727 and now fully support this legislation and encourage the Committee to give this bill a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Melvin R. Thompson
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs and Public Policy