

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** Kaelan Richards

February 9, 2012

(202) 225-3661

## **DELAURO CALLS FOR IMPROVED FOOD LABELING**

### ***Asks FDA to provide consumers with accurate representation on sugar ingredients***

**Washington, DC**— Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (CT-3), Ranking Member on the Labor, Health, and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee, called upon the Food and Drug Administration to improve food labeling requirements to ensure that sugars are listed in a more accurate way.

Current food labeling standards require that each individual sugar included in a product is listed by its technical name, such as dextrose or maltose. These names may not be easily identified as sugar by the average consumer, and are not grouped together in the ingredient list.

Additionally, the current standards specify that each separate ingredient is listed in order of their individual weight, starting with the heaviest, or most common. This means that if a product has many different types of sugar, they can be listed further down the list— even though the total amount of sugar could be greater than all other ingredients.

Congresswoman DeLauro is asking that each ingredient that is a sugar be identified as such, in addition to its technical name, as well as listing all of the sugar ingredients together as one, so that the true sugar content of a product is clear to consumers.

“When added sugars are hidden amongst other ingredients and are not described in a manner that is readily apparent, consumers may not be aware of the total amount of added sugars in the food they purchase and consume. Providing consumers with a more accurate representation of the amount of added sugars in the products that they buy will enable informed dietary decisions,” Congresswoman DeLauro writes. “This modification in labeling of the food ingredients would group the added sugars together to appropriately and clearly identify them. It would also indicate to consumers the relative amount of added sugars in their food options.”

The text of the letter is below.

February 8, 2012

Margaret Hamburg, M.D.

Commissioner

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

10903 New Hampshire Ave

Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002

Dear Commissioner Hamburg:

I am writing to encourage you to amend the agency's regulations regarding the designation of ingredients in food. Specifically, I encourage you to redefine how added sugars are presented to consumers in the ingredients section of food labels.

Our country is facing an obesity epidemic, with more than one-third of children and more than two-thirds of adults overweight or obese. An average of 16% of the total calories in the average Americans' diet come from added sugars, even as the World Health Organization recommends that it should be reduced to no more than 10% and the American Heart Association recommends no more than 100 calories per day for women and no more than 150 calories per day for men from added sugars. Obesity, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes have all been linked to our increased consumption of added sugars. The amount of added sugars to foods must be clearly identified in the nutrition and ingredients sections of food labels to allow Americans to make informed dietary choices.

To clearly identify them, I believe the term 'added sugars' should be listed as a single food ingredient with a corresponding parenthetical list of the specific sugars added. This 'added sugar' ingredient list should follow current regulations, with the specific sugars listed by descending weight within the parenthetical aside. The combined weight of all added sugars should be used to determine where the 'added sugars' rank in the food. I strongly encourage you to make this clarification to the ingredient list of food labels to provide the public with easy access to this critical health information.

When added sugars are hidden amongst other ingredients and are not described in a manner that is readily apparent, consumers may not be aware of the total amount of added sugars in the food they purchase and consume. Providing consumers with a more accurate representation of the amount of added sugars in the products that they buy will enable informed dietary decisions. This modification in labeling of the food ingredients would group the added sugars together to appropriately and clearly identify them. It would also indicate to consumers the relative amount of added sugars in their food options.

Thank you for your attention to this issue, and I look forward to our continued work together to protect the health of Americans.

Sincerely,

ROSA L. DeLAURO

Member of Congress

###

[DeLauro.House.Gov](http://DeLauro.House.Gov)

---

Kaelan Richards  
Communications Director  
Office of Congresswoman Rosa L. DeLauro (CT-03)  
(202) 225-3661 office  
(202) 225-1599 cell