



December 18, 2007

Division of Docket Management  
(HFA-305)  
Food and Drug Administration  
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061  
Rockville, MD 20852

**Request for Extension of Comment Period**

Docket No. 2006N-0168  
Food Labeling: Revision of Reference Values and Mandatory Nutrients; Advance Notice  
of Proposed Rulemaking; 72 FR 62149

Dear Sir or Madam:

**The American Beverage Association (ABA) respectfully requests that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) extend the public comment period for the above referenced docket by at least ninety days beyond the current deadline of January 31, 2008, to April 30, 2008.**

The American Beverage Association is the national trade organization representing the broad spectrum of companies that manufacture and distribute non-alcoholic beverages in the United States. Our members are producers, marketers and distributors of virtually every non-alcoholic refreshment beverage, including bottled waters, teas, sports drinks, energy drinks, water beverages, fruit juices, fruit drinks, milk-based beverages, full calorie carbonated soft drinks, mid-calorie carbonated soft drinks and diet carbonated soft drinks. It is on behalf of these member companies that we request this extension to the comment period.

FDA's November 2, 2007 advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM) raises a number of very complex, detailed and substantive issues. The changes suggested to both the reference values as well as to the mandatory nutrients could well result in the most ambitious and significant changes to the nutrition facts panel since its inception in the early 1990s. In addition to the potential impact of any substantive changes to the current regulatory framework surrounding the nutrition facts panel, the economic impact of label changes which would subsequently be required would be significant to ABA member companies.

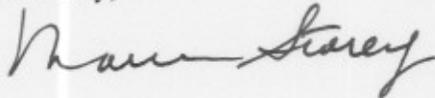
ABA member companies appreciate the opportunity to work with FDA in shaping policies designed to inform and educate consumers about nutrition. We would note that

there are several other open FDA dockets which address nutrition issues, including rulemakings on the regulatory status of sodium and the use of nutrition symbols. Further, two other initiatives, one addressing possible changes in the reference amount customarily consumed and the other which addresses increasing the prominence of caloric information, have also been introduced and are currently pending.

Many of these initiatives are interrelated and reflect FDA's efforts to constructively address nutrition issues. They also reflect the complexity of these issues. In particular, this ANPRM addressing changes in both the reference values and mandatory nutrients raises a complex set of issues, as is evidenced by the 75 questions posed by FDA in the document.

Considering the complexity of these issues, along with the practical implications of addressing these issues over a variety of federal holidays, ABA respectfully requests that FDA extend the comment period until April 30, 2008.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maureen Storey".

Maureen Storey, Ph.D.  
Senior Vice President, Science Policy  
American Beverage Association