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September 9, 2019

Chancellor Richard A. Carranza
New York City Schools
NYC Department of Education
Tweed Courthouse, 52 Chambers Street
New York, New York 10007

RE: Ban of Chocolate Milk in NYC Schools

Dear Chancellor Carranza,

On behalf of New York Farm Bureau, the state's largest general farm organization, I am writing to express our concern regarding the proposed ban of chocolate milk in New York City School meals. While we understand the intent is to serve healthy meals to children, this ban will have the opposite effect on children who receive meals at school and the nutrients they receive, as well as substantial economic impact on New York dairy farmers that are already experiencing hardship.

New York State is home to over 4,000 dairy farms and represents New York's largest agriculture industry. Our dairy farmers are proud to supply a wholesome product to school children all across New York, including New York City. There have been many studies that show the importance dairy in children's diets and the benefits of the vitamins it provides. Research has shown children who drink flavored milk consume more of the important nutrients related to healthy growth and development such as calcium, vitamin D, and potassium, in comparison to non-flavored milk drinkers. Additionally, studies have shown that flavored milk consumption is not connected with weight gain or even high total daily sugar intake in children¹.

Flavored milk is a popular choice among children, with over two-thirds of milk served in schools being flavored milk, making it an essential way for children to receive their nutrition. Research has shown that removing flavored milk reduced nutritional intake in children, increased the amount of food waste as well as reduced the number of school meals served. In a study conducted by Cornell University of Oregon schools, the total daily milk sales decreased by 9.9% when flavored milk was removed from the cafeteria and contributed to a 6.8% decrease in children eating lunch². In the Los Angeles Unified District, a 78% decrease in milk waste was shown when flavored milk was returned as an option as well as an increase in number of school meals served³. The Dietary Guidelines and school meals program, as developed by the U.S Department of Agriculture, allows

¹ . Murray, R., & Bhatia, J. J. S. (2015). Snacks, Sweetened Beverages, Added Sugars, and Schools. American Academy of Pediatrics, 135(1098), 578–579. doi: 10.1542/peds.2014-3902

Johnson RK, Frary C, Wang MQ. The nutritional consequences of flavored-milk consumption by school-aged children and adolescents in the United States. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 2002;102(6):853–856

Murphy MM, Douglass JS, Johnson RK, Spence LA. Drinking flavored or plain milk is positively associated with nutrient intake and is not associated with adverse effects on weight status in US children and adolescents. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 2008;108(4):631–639

² Hanks AS, Just DR, Wansink B (2014) Chocolate Milk Consequences: A Pilot Study Evaluating the Consequences of Banning Chocolate Milk in School Cafeterias. *PLOS ONE* 9(4): e91022. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0091022>

³ Los Angeles Unified School District. L.A. Unified Seeks to Reduce Waste via Pilot Programs Addressing Milk Waste. 2016. <https://home.lausd.net/apps/news/article/625445>

for the consumption of both flavored and unflavored milk. Studies have shown that milk consumption at the noon meal is critical and is correlated with overall diet quality as well as calcium intake⁴.

For these reasons, New York Farm Bureau urges you to continue to allow the option of flavored milk to children in New York City Schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Fisher". The signature is stylized and cursive.

David Fisher
President

⁴ Murray, R., & Bhatia, J. J. S. (2015). Snacks, Sweetened Beverages, Added Sugars, and Schools. *American Academy of Pediatrics*, 135(1098), 578–579. doi: 10.1542/peds.2014-3902
Johnson RK, Panely C, Wang MQ. The association between noon beverages consumption and diet quality of school-age children. *J Child Nutr Manag*. 1998; 22(2): 95-100