

## 'Flexibility' on school sodium targets not an option, says American Heart Association

July 21 2015, by Retha Sherrod

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American Heart Association CEO Nancy Brown issued the following comments today on the Senate Agriculture Appropriations bill that would delay the sodium requirement for school foods under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act:

"When it comes to the [sodium](#) standards for school meals, there should be no 'flexibility.' If we don't decrease our children's daily salt intake, many may end up having heart attacks and strokes before they reach adulthood.

Yet, a provision included in the Senate Agriculture Appropriations bill would delay the second target for sodium reduction in [school meals](#). Committee members say we need more research to support such a decrease. But the research is already there. More importantly, many schools around the nation are meeting the Tier 2 sodium standard right now. Do we really want to jeopardize our children's health by telling these dedicated school officials to put salt-laden foods back on the menu?

Americans' heart health will also suffer from other bill provisions that place burdensome restrictions on the 2015 Dietary Guidelines and stalls their release. Additionally, the bill delays compliance with menu-labeling for one year.

Finally, the legislation contains report language concerning added sugars on the update to the Nutrition Facts panel and FDA's [sodium reduction](#)

efforts. The report section suggests that the science is not strong enough to warrant these activities. Dietary recommendations worldwide support limiting added sugars, sodium and saturated fat to maintain a healthy lifestyle. These actions are evidence-based and critical for ensuring the cardiovascular health of our nation.

We call on Congress to strike these provisions from the final legislation."

Provided by American Heart Association

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