April 27 2017

The Honorable John Hoeven  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Agriculture,  
Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
129 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Agriculture,  
Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
190 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Hoeven and Ranking Member Merkley:

As you finalize appropriations legislation for FY 2017, we urge you to include language that expresses support for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) moving forward with voluntary sodium reduction targets for the food manufacturing industry. We support efforts to inform consumers on the appropriate amounts of sodium in the American diet and believe moving forward with the voluntary targets will help facilitate those efforts.

We support research efforts to continue to expand knowledge of the science around sodium intake, which includes a reassessment of the DRI for sodium for the general public, as well as “at risk” populations. In the meantime, draft voluntary sodium reduction targets will help to continue the dialogue with FDA and inform companies’ decision-making about the pace and scale at which this innovation needs to occur.

Each of the signed companies has independently reduced sodium in its products, demonstrating that sodium reduction is achievable. By developing a common benchmark or target, all companies will be encouraged to improve the nutritional value of their products. While not binding, voluntary targets can help support alternatives for consumers and level the playing field for companies.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please let us know if we can provide any additional information or support for this issue. We look forward continuing this conversation.

Sincerely,

Mars, Incorporated  
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Nestlé  
American Heart Association

PepsiCo, Inc.  
American Public Health Association

Unilever  
Center for Science in the Public Interest