

September 9, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chair
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Hoeven
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural
Development, Food and Drug Administration,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Dietary Guidelines for Americans: FY23 Appropriations Priorities

Dear Chairman Leahy, Vice Chairman Shelby, Chairwoman Baldwin, Ranking Member Hoeven, Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

The undersigned organizations strongly support the inclusion of funds to support the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies bill. As FY23 appropriations are finalized, we respectfully request that the Senate increase the allocation for ensuring the scientific integrity of the *Dietary Guidelines* from \$7,300,000 to \$10,200,000, which would match the House of Representative's FY23 Agriculture appropriations bill.

This funding will increase staff and resources at the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) to implement the *Dietary Guidelines, 2020-2025* and develop the *Dietary Guidelines, 2025-2030*, which includes collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Congress has provided some funding for the *Dietary Guidelines* from FY19 to FY21 but has never provided significant or sustained levels of funding to increase staff to meet the needs of CNPP. Additional funds and staff will ensure the staffing levels of nutrition and data scientists, economists and other specialists are sufficient for the effective development, promotion, and integration of the *Dietary Guidelines* into other programs. This increase in funding will also complement other major initiatives of CNPP such as the Nutrition Evidence Systematic Review (NESR), MyPlate, the Healthy Eating Index (HEI), USDA Food Plans (including the Thrifty Food Plan), food pattern modeling, and nutrition education efforts. Additional funds will also support CNPP, in collaboration with HHS and the National Cancer Institute staff, to develop an HEI score for children under two years of age and update the existing HEI-2015 score to align with the *Dietary Guidelines, 2020-2025*.

The *Dietary Guidelines* is the nation's leading set of science-based food and nutrition recommendations aimed at supporting public health and preventing chronic disease. It is the foundational tool used by

health professionals, policymakers, and federal food and nutrition program administrators serving nutritious foods to millions of kids, parents, seniors, veterans, and all others who live in the United States each day.

Congress mandates that each iteration of the guidelines “shall be based on the preponderance of the scientific and medical knowledge *which is current at the time the report is prepared.*” 42 U.S.C. 217a(2), Section 222 of the Public Health Service Act, as amended (emphasis added). The *Dietary Guidelines* process thus should be viewed and structured as a continuous cycle of scientific inquiry enabling and incorporating best practices of research design, evidence analysis, and systematic review, regularly punctuated by the reports. Ensuring scientific integrity of the *Dietary Guidelines* requires the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)’s and HHS’s sustained commitment to transparency, accountability, and a scientifically rigorous process; it requires Congress’s sustained commitment to the purposes of the *Dietary Guidelines* and a sustained investment in the ongoing processes for its development and implementation. It is clear from the statutory language referenced above that Congressional intent specifically prioritized scientific integrity and accuracy without undue influence from non-scientific interests. Thus, matching the investment of the House best reflects this intent.

In addition to investments in the development of the *Dietary Guidelines* themselves, it’s critical to note that investments in nutrition research have remained stagnant for decades, leading to perpetual research gaps that preclude the *Guidelines* from answering topical questions relevant to individuals, clinicians, and policymakers. Coordination across federal agencies implementing the *Dietary Guidelines* remains inconsistent even as rates of diet-related disease and health disparities continue to climb, which the COVID-19 pandemic exasperated.

Once again, we urge you to increase the Senate appropriations allocation to match the investment of the House, which is a significant first step in rectifying the structural problems that have compounded over years of inadequate funding for human nutrition research, nutrition education, and the development and dissemination processes of the *Dietary Guidelines*. Thank you for your careful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

1,000 Days, an Initiative of FHI Solutions
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Advocates for Better Children's Diets
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Heart Association
American Institute for Cancer Research
American Society for Nutrition
Association of SNAP Nutrition Education Administrators (ASNNA)
Association of State Public Health Nutritionists
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Community Food Advocates
Council for a Strong America / Mission: Readiness
Defeat Malnutrition Today
Earthjustice
Health Care Without Harm
Healthy Food America
Healthy Schools Campaign
International Fresh Produce Association

Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future
LunchAssist
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Center for Health Research
Obesity Action Coalition
Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness
Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior
Society of Behavioral Medicine
Union of Concerned Scientists