

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 7, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretaries Burwell and Vilsack,

We write regarding the forthcoming *2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* to strongly encourage the Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Agriculture (USDA) to publish only nutritional and dietary information and guidelines that are based in sound scientific evidence and current medical knowledge. By law, the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* must contain nutritional and dietary information and guidelines for the general public, must be based on the preponderance of scientific and medical knowledge current at the time of publication, and must be promoted by each Federal agency in carrying out any Federal food, nutrition, or health program. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* are the basis for nutritional information utilized by millions of Americans; therefore, it is critical that you ensure these guidelines are developed using widely agreed upon, consensus-based scientific and medical research related to nutrition and diet.

We have significant concerns that the Scientific Report written by the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) included recommendations that are not based on a preponderance of scientific and medical knowledge. As you develop and finalize the *2015 Dietary Guidelines*, it is essential that the final report is of the utmost scientific integrity, and also builds upon previously established guidance documents that have demonstrated evidence of improved health and dietary patterns among Americans.

The *Dietary Guidelines* provide the basis of nutritional information for a number of federal programs under HHS and USDA, some of which include the Food and Drug Administration's Nutrition Facts labeling initiative, the Food and Nutrition Service's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, nutrition facts labeling and food safety education conducted by the Food Safety and Inspection Service, food allowances for U.S. military, and child and foster care guidelines. These and other federal programs, as well as nutrition professionals, medical professionals, and consumers, rely on the Dietary Guidelines to be

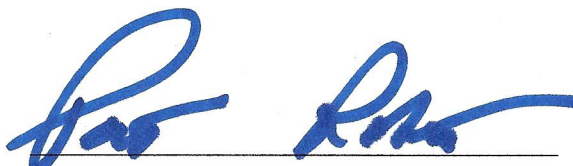
independent, unbiased, and rooted in a preponderance of science to ensure policies impacting Americans every day are sound, practical, and able to be implemented to affect and influence dietary patterns and nutritional choices.

As you review the multitude of public comments that have been submitted, consider input from federal agencies, and work to finalize the *2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, we encourage you to consider recommendations that are based on a preponderance of current scientific and medical knowledge, promote healthy diets, and reduce chronic disease risk for Americans. It is critical that Congress and the American people have confidence in the integrity of the final product, and that the *2015 Dietary Guidelines* are not agenda-driven, but are based in strong, consistent science and current medical knowledge that will effectively result in healthy dietary patterns.

Sincerely,



Chairman Lamar Alexander
Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions



Chairman Pat Roberts
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry