



The Hon Ms Anna Bligh, MP  
The Premier  
c/o TV food and drink advertising to children  
Queensland Health  
GPO Box 48  
BRISBANE, QLD 4001

15 October, 2008

Dear Premier

On behalf of the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) and its members, I write to congratulate you on your recent proposal to ban or regulate junk food and drink advertising during peak children's television viewing times in Queensland. This is a very politically courageous and bold move and we applaud you and the Minister for Health, Mr Stephen Robertson MP, for having the courage to tackle this issue, particularly in isolation from the rest of Australia.

As outlined in the enclosed position statement, since 1999 the PHAA has been advocating a ban on all TV food advertising at times when children comprise the majority of the viewing audience. This ban needs to be more encompassing than the current regulations for C and P programs, as these are not the only times significant numbers of Queensland children are watching TV (potentially unsupervised).

The PHAA has been a member of the Coalition on Food Advertising to Children (CFAC) since its commencement in 2002 and therefore advocates a ban on all food advertising, not just junk food. We have adopted this strong position, because just banning junk food would create years of debate about what is, and what is not, junk food; thereby creating more years of inaction.

While we appreciate the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating gives guidance on what foods should be consumed for good health, there are potential grey areas (e.g. Nutri-Grain, Coco Pops and LCM's are foods that could fit into the breads and cereals food group, but the PHAA believes these foods are too refined and too high in sugar to be "healthy" foods which is the way they are advertised). Also, it is important to note that while the food industry regularly argue "there are no junk foods, just junk diets", trying to categorise all the foods

on supermarket shelves as well as those in take-away stores, would be very difficult and very time consuming to develop, implement, evaluate and keep up to date (as is evident by Food Standards Australia New Zealand's current attempt to categorise foods and drinks for health claims legislation).

Once again we applaud your bold move to regulate TV food and drink advertising in Queensland; however we also encourage you to take a step further by banning all food and drink advertising during children's peak viewing times. To this end we support action between the hours of 7 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. seven days a week as proposed in the second option of the "Have Your Say" questionnaire. As suggested in our position statement, truly healthy foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables, plain milk and wholemeal bread could still be promoted via Community Service Announcements.

We look forward to a strong health promoting outcome from this consultation, and urge you to put our children's health before corporate wealth by banning all food and drink advertising during children's peak television viewing times in Queensland.

Yours sincerely

Michael Moore  
CEO Public Health Association of Australia