

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 31, 2015

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

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

Dear Secretaries Vilsack and Burwell:

We are writing today to express our sincere disappointment with the recent report issued by the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) and certain recommendations for the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA). The DGA play a critical role as the scientific basis for federal nutrition policy development and form the basis of Federal nutrition policy, education, outreach, and food assistance programs used by consumers, industry, nutrition educators, and health professionals. Therefore, it is essential that the DGA be based on sound nutrition science and not stray into other areas outside of this specific discipline.

However, after reviewing the DGAC report that was released February 19, 2015, we believe that the Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee greatly exceeded their scope in developing recommendations for the Secretaries of USDA and HHS to the detriment of the American diet. It is the responsibility of the Secretaries to ensure that this advisory committee stay focused on nutritional recommendations and not the wider policy realm of sustainability and tax policy, in which members of this committee had neither expertise, evidence, nor charter.

We are disappointed with reports from observers that the approach of the 2015 DGAC suggests studies were either selected or excluded to support pre-determined conclusions. For example, the DGAC's recommendation on lean red meat directly contradicts years of peer reviewed scientific research on the benefits of lean red meat as a high quality source of protein in a healthy diet. It is crucial for HHS and the USDA to recognize the need for flexibility in the American diet that reflects the diverse population of this country.

It is extremely difficult to reverse or change public policy, once enacted, without causing consumer confusion. Inaccurate and conflicting dietary guidance messages are detrimental to consumer understanding of nutrition and the ability to build healthy diets. At a time when consumers are already subjected to conflicting and often contradictory nutrition and health information, providing the public with science-based, realistic and achievable information is more likely to contribute to improved public health outcomes.

We encourage you to focus the development of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines based on a "preponderance" of current scientific and medical knowledge and to ensure that the 2015 DGA are irrefutably science-based, consistent with advice from other federal agencies, and are communicated in terms easily understood by the public.

Sincerely,



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Member of Congress



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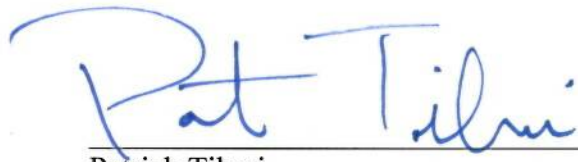
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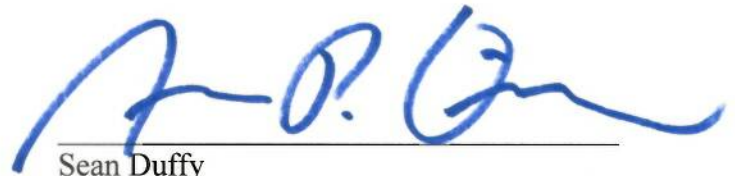
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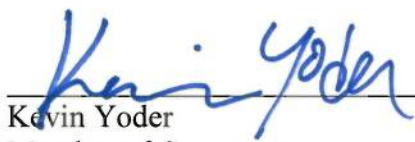
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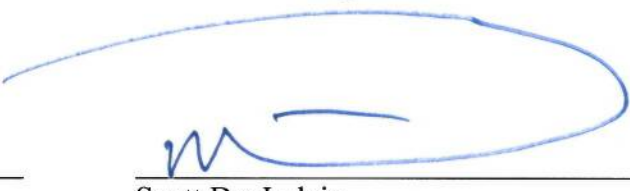
  
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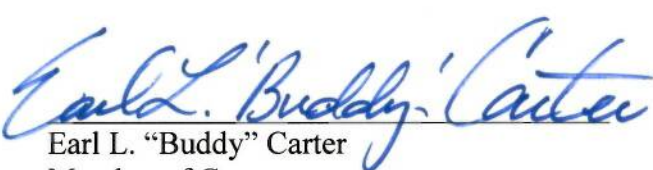
  
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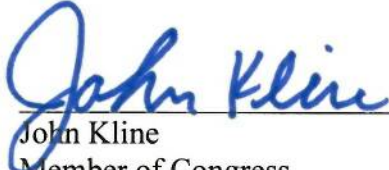
  
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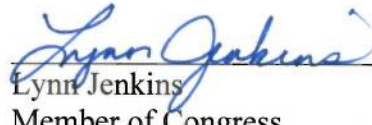
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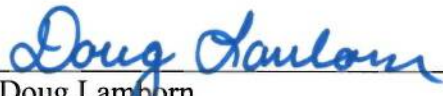
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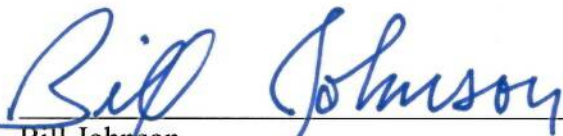
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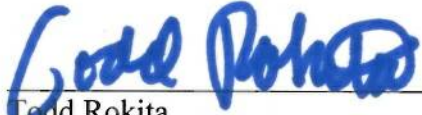
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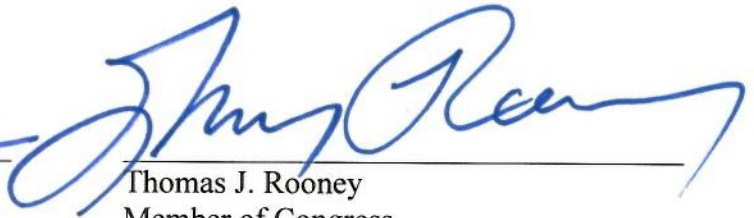
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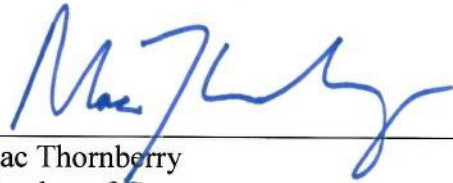
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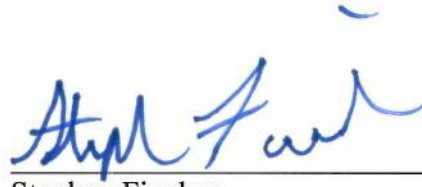
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