

**Remarks of Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate  
At the First Childhood Obesity Task Force Meeting**

**March 21, 2007**

Last fall, I, along with many of you, attended the Institute of Medicine's unveiling of its most recent report regarding childhood obesity. This report called for leadership from the government, industry, communities, schools, and families in mobilizing the resources required to address childhood obesity. I am elated that each of you chose to step up and join this task force, so that together we can seek solutions that educate and inspire Americans to live healthier and more active lifestyles.

Over the past several months I have had the opportunity to travel around the nation, visiting many of you, and attending conferences from New York to California. In the conversations that I have had, I was pleased to discover that the entire country is poised to attack this epidemic. In fact, many of you have already begun taking action.

- I was excited to hear about Disney's "Healthy Kids Initiative" and other policies for healthful eating at its theme parks and restaurants, banning trans fats, as well as for the use of its characters on healthy foods like fruits and veggies.

- McDonald's has recently selected a new trans-fat-free oil for cooking its french fries.
- And programmers have developed programs that encourage activity, like Nickelodeon's "Let's Just Play" encourages kids to go out and play by actually "going dark" for 3 hours on their Worldwide Day of Play.
- The Discovery Health Channel is promoting its fourth annual National Body Challenge to encourage health and fitness. Discovery Health's National Body Challenge is a free, eight-week, comprehensive fitness and weight-loss challenge that provides the tools and inspiration, online and on television, to get in shape, shed extra pounds and adopt a healthier lifestyle.
- America's Milk Processors recently launched the "Think About Your Drink" campaign, which aims to help battle childhood obesity by encourage American's to exercise together, eat nutritious meals, and choose lowfat milk rather than sugar drinks.
- Last October, I met with researchers at the Kellogg company who explained how food science is playing a critical role in the development of food crops like soybeans that form the basis of a more healthful diet, including the reduction of harmful trans fats.
- PepsiCo and Kraft have introduced a line of snack products aimed at portion control – each serving is limited to 100 calories. This is a

wonderful response, not only to obesity, but a response to a marketplace that is hopefully becoming more attuned to how much they eat.

- Just last month the Ad Council launched the Childhood Obesity Prevention campaign which includes both television and radio ads inspiring children to eat well and be physically active.
- And later this month, Food Network will air an hour-long documentary titled “Childhood Obesity: Danger Zone,” which explores both what is fueling the explosion in overweight youth and what parents, teachers, doctors and public officials are doing to fight this epidemic.

Like I have said many times before, borrowing from “It takes a village,” ***it will take an entire society to solve this epidemic.*** This is not about a child having a birthday party, or the occasional treat. This is not about celebrating Valentine’s Day, and giving your grandmother a box of chocolates. This is about our overall picture and living a more balanced, healthy lifestyle. I appreciate all that you have already done to battle this epidemic. I am excited to see the solutions that will come out of this task force, and I look forward to working with you all.