

March 9, 2021



Rep. Heather Edelson
549 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Rep. Edelson :

The Minnesota Dental Hygienists Association supports HF1307, legislation that would make healthier food and drinks the default options on restaurant kids' meal menus.

Sugary beverages make up about 47% of added sugar in our diets (What We Eat in America, NHANES 2009-2010). This same source identifies 17 teaspoons of sugar in a 20 oz. soda.

In addition to contributing to systemic diseases like diabetes, sugary drinks are a leading cause of tooth decay in children. According to the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH 2015), half of Minnesota third graders have or have had tooth decay. The MDH 2019 Minnesota Student Survey found that students of color and those who reported economic hardship were consuming sugary drinks 3 or more times a day.

We must reduce the trends we are seeing in tooth decay and other diseases. Tooth decay is preventable. This proposed legislation provides an opportunity to alleviate these problems by reducing the consumption of added sugar in children's restaurant meals by offering healthier choices when requested. This change may lead to parents making healthier food and beverage choices more often.

Thank you for your support of HF1307.

Respectfully,

Amanda Weyek

Amanda Weyek, President
Minnesota Dental Hygienists Association