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March 19, 2012

The Honorable Das Williams
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 6011
Sacramento, CA 95814

VIA FACSIMILE – 916.319.2135

RE: AB 1746 (Williams) – Stop Sports Drinks Sale during School – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Williams:

California Food Policy Advocates supports AB 1746, which would prohibit the sale of sports drinks during the school day. AB 1746 closes the unfortunate loophole that allows sports drinks to be sold during school hours and, in effect, to compete with healthy beverages like fresh, free drinking water and milk.

The combination of the word “sport” in the drinks’ name and their widespread marketing gives the mistaken impression that sports drinks are healthy and essential for success on and off the field. Yet a growing body of research demonstrates that sports drinks, like other sugary beverages, contribute to the obesity epidemic and its related health risks including diabetes and cancer. Moreover, sports drinks are high in sodium -- a contributor to high blood pressure -- and these drinks’ acidity and sugar content add to the risks of tooth decay and enamel erosion.

Sports drinks were never intended as an everyday beverage option. They were created to help elite athletes recover after strenuous exercise. Middle and high school students simply do not need, nor does their health and learning benefit from, the sale of sports drinks during school hours.

Schools play a key role in teaching students about health and wellness and helping students develop healthy nutrition and beverage consumption habits and preferences. Thank you for your leadership in making schools healthier by advocating for the passage of AB 1746.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ellen Braff-Guajardo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ellen" being the most prominent.

ELLEN BRAFF-GUAJARDO
Senior Nutrition Policy Advocate