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NMPF and IDFA Commend Introduction of School Milk Nutrition Act

WASHINGTON, DC – A bipartisan bill to help reverse the decline of milk consumption in schools will be introduced this afternoon by Representatives G.T. Thompson (R-PA) and Joe Courtney (D-CT). The School Milk Nutrition Act of 2015 focuses on preserving milk's role in school feeding programs, while complying with the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA).

The School Milk Nutrition Act of 2015 aims to increase milk consumption in schools by reaffirming the requirement that milk is offered with each school meal, consistent with current law and the DGA. The bill also aims to improve the variety and availability of milk served in schools through a new pilot program and research.

The International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) and the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) strongly support the bill and encourage Congress to adopt it in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization process.

“With Congress set to reauthorize school nutrition programs this year, we applaud Congressman Thompson and Congressman Courtney for introducing this bill, and for recognizing the importance of milk to the health and well-being of our nation's school children,” said Connie Tipton, president and CEO of IDFA.

Highlighting the nutritional importance and history of school milk over the past century, the National Dairy Council (NDC) recently released a new report, “Fluid Milk in School Meal Programs.” The NDC report identified declining milk consumption in schools as a concern and noted it is difficult to replace the nutrient package found in milk with other foods, without adding extra calories and cost. The NDC report is available [here](#).

“Although milk is the number one source of nine essential nutrients in young Americans' diets and provides multiple health benefits, children over four years old are not meeting the federal guidance that advises three daily servings of milk or other dairy foods for children nine years and older,” said Jim

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Mulhern, president and CEO of NMPF. He noted that from 2012 to 2014, schools served 187 million fewer half-pints of milk, although total public school enrollment grew during that period.

Authorization for the federal child nutrition programs expires at the end of September, and Congress is now beginning the process of reauthorizing the programs.

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About IDFA

The International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA), Washington, D.C., represents the nation's dairy manufacturing and marketing industries and their suppliers, with a membership of 550 companies within a \$125-billion a year industry. IDFA is composed of three constituent organizations: the Milk Industry Foundation (MIF), the National Cheese Institute (NCI) and the International Ice Cream Association (IICA). IDFA's nearly 200 dairy processing members run nearly 600 plant operations, and range from large multi-national organizations to single-plant companies. Together they represent more than 85 percent of the milk, cultured products, cheese, ice cream and frozen desserts produced and marketed in the United States. IDFA can be found online at www.idfa.org.

About NMPF

The National Milk Producers Federation, based in Arlington, VA, develops and carries out policies that advance the wellbeing of dairy producers and the cooperatives they own. The members of NMPF's cooperatives produce the majority of the U.S. milk supply, making NMPF the voice of more than 32,000 dairy producers on Capitol Hill and with government agencies. Visit www.nmpf.org for more information.