



March 10, 2021

Chair Freiberg and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Minnesota Dental Association and our 3,000 members I am writing in support of House File 1307 to establish healthy children's meal requirements at restaurants. The food and beverages we consume can have a direct impact on the incidence and progression of tooth decay. Our members care about their patients and support legislation that will encourage healthier eating and drinking habits and improve oral health outcomes amongst children.

"Your mouth, teeth, and gums are more than just tools for eating. They are essential for chewing and swallowing – the first steps in the digestion process. Your mouth is your body's initial point of contact with nutrients you consume. So what you put in your mouth impacts not only your general health but also that of your teeth and gums. In fact, if your nutrition is poor, the first signs often show up in your mouth" (American Dental Association).

Dentists educate and encourage their patients to limit sugar, which can reduce the risk of cavities. It is even more critical to ensure that children, who need strong and healthy teeth, to limit the number of sugars they are consuming. Sweetened beverages, in particular, is damaging for our dental health and smiles. We encourage this committee to support House File 1307.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Nickman M.D." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Jim Nickman
Pediatric Dentist and President of the Minnesota Dental Association