

ACTION ALERT

From WASAVP

The Washington Association for Substance Abuse and Violence Prevention

For Immediate Release: July 12, 2010

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ONLY FOUR DAYS LEFT!

**Don't Let Big Alcohol Take Advantage of
New Dietary Recommendations**

**New Guidelines on Alcohol Consumption
Threaten Public Health & Safety**

TAKE ACTION:

Join WASAVP & the Marin Institute in submitting your comments to the federal government on the Alcohol Section of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

**DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS -- THURSDAY, JULY 15,
2010**

WHY:

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Report was released on June 15, 2010. This report forms the basis for the federal government's highly influential (and political) Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Revised every five years, the guidelines include both nutrition advice and recommendations regarding alcohol consumption.

***The new Report suggests that increased daily
consumption is safe.***

We need your help to tell the Committee they are

making unscientific and potentially dangerous recommendations that the alcohol industry will surely use to its advantage.

Public comments on the report will be accepted until 5pm EDT, July 15, 2010.

Online statements of 2000 or less characters, and/or attached documents of longer length, are allowed.

We have submitted our comments, please send yours too.

TO SUBMIT COMMENTS GO TO:

<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/dietaryguidelines.htm>

Click on "SUBMIT written comments" button.

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

Dangerous Shift from Daily to Average Consumption Guidelines

The Report suggests that alcohol consumption guidelines be based on average consumption, rather than per-day consumption (as the current Guidelines recommend). The Report also states that drinking up to 4 drinks per day, three times a week for men and 3 drinks per day, twice a week for women would constitute "moderate" drinking, as long as the average limits over one week are not exceeded. This type of drinking behavior poses serious risks to the general public, and should not be recommended by any agency concerned about public health.

Studies of "Moderate" Drinking are Seriously Flawed

Moderate drinking is associated with myriad health risks, including numerous cancers (e.g. breast and esophageal) and chronic illnesses such as pancreatitis. In addition, the evidence regarding health benefits from drinking alcohol is questionable at best. There have been zero randomized controlled trials—the gold standard for scientific evidence—for low alcohol consumption levels and mortality outcomes to date. Without such evidence, we should remain as conservative as possible when drawing scientific conclusions regarding any alleged health benefits of moderate alcohol consumption.

Alcohol Industry Misuse of Public Health Recommendations

The substantial shift to recommending higher per-occasion and per-day alcohol consumption, plus suggestions that the questionable benefits from drinking outweigh the known risks, are gifts to the alcohol industry. The Committee must be aware that the Report's messages about alcohol consumption will be misinterpreted by the powerful corporations and trade organizations that sell and promote alcoholic beverages. The alcohol industry has a long history of exploiting the Dietary Guidelines for their benefit, and the suggestions contained in the Report lend themselves to further misuse.

We are especially concerned that despite the Report's caveats, the industry will use the new recommendations to promote alcohol consumption and increased consumption.

We ask that the Committee revise the Report and subsequent Guidelines to send a much more cautionary, evidence-based message regarding alcohol consumption to the public.

We specifically ask that the new Guidelines maintain the formulation of 2/1 per-day consumption of alcohol for men and women, respectively.

To read the entire alcohol section of the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Report:

<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/DGAC/Report/D-7-Alcohol.pdf>

To read Marin Institute's complete comments:

https://www.marininstitute.org/site/images/stories/pdfs/dietary_guidelines_letter.pdf

(Marin Institute thanks Dr. Tim Naimi, of Boston Medical Center, for his help with these comments.)

(Above borrowed from Marin Institute Action Alert)