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American Frozen Food Institute Applauds Senate Approval of Collins-Udall Amendment to Block Limit on Starchy Vegetables in Schools

McLean, VA – [American Frozen Food Institute](#) (AFFI) President and CEO Kraig R. Naasz issued the following statement today in support of an amendment to a Senate agriculture appropriations bill that blocks the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) from limiting the amount of potatoes, corn, peas, lima beans and other starchy vegetables that can be served in federally-funded school meal programs. The amendment was offered by Sens. Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Mark Udall (D-Colo.) and approved unanimously by voice vote Tuesday evening.

“AFFI applauds Sens. Collins and Udall for charting a path forward to improve nutrition in school meals. We are particularly grateful for their efforts at ensuring schools and the children they serve continue to have access to a variety of nutritious foods as part of school lunch and breakfast programs, and hope the U.S. Department of Agriculture will heed their direction.

“In the struggle to address childhood obesity, these programs represent a significant opportunity to expose students to a wide range of healthy fruits and vegetables consistent with the recommendations found in USDA’s *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. The so-called ‘starchy vegetables’ kids have long enjoyed and USDA proposes to limit are an important source of vitamins and minerals, such as fiber and potassium, and provide the energy kids need to stay mentally attentive and physically active throughout the school day.

“Adoption of the Collins-Udall amendment is also a critical step toward ensuring school administrators are given the flexibility to meet the demands of providing healthier meals to students without burdening schools with massive new costs.”

The U.S. Department of Agriculture in January issued proposed changes to the nutrition standards governing federal school meals programs that would, among other provisions, limit the serving of starchy vegetables to one total cup per student per week at lunch and none at breakfast. By USDA’s own estimates, its proposed nutrition standards would increase costs to schools by 50 cents per breakfast served and 14 cents per lunch.

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The American Frozen Food Institute is the national trade association promoting and representing the interests of all segments of the frozen food industry. AFFI works to foster industry development and growth, and advocates before legislative and regulatory entities on the industry's behalf. More information can be found at www.affi.org.