



**For Immediate Release**

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## **WLF OPPOSES EFFORTS BY FOOD POLICE TARGETING SOFT DRINK BEVERAGES**

The Washington Legal Foundation (WLF) filed comments with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) today urging the agency to reject a petition filed earlier this year by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), a Washington, D.C. based activist group founded by Ralph Nader, that would require warning labels on non-diet soda cans and bottles advising consumers, among other things, that "drinking too much soft drinks may contribute to weight gain." WLF argued that such warning labels are not mandated by law and, as a matter of public policy, are unnecessary since current labels on all beverages provide caloric content, sugar content, and other nutritional information to help consumers make informed choices.

In its comments, WLF noted that studies do not bear out the claim that drinking non-diet sodas are the cause of overweight or obese children as CSPI claims. For example, one recent study by the International Journal of Obesity found that sugared snack foods, including sweetened soft drinks, were not a significant factor of weight gain among children and adolescents. In addition, exercise and family history also play important roles in determining body weight. WLF further argued that if warning labels were required on soda drinks, then warning labels would be required for many other beverages, including 100% fruit juices. For example, a typical 12 oz. can of cola contains 140 calories and 39 grams of sugar. However, a 12 oz. can or bottle of 100 percent apple juice contains approximately 180 calories and 44 grams of sugar. Therefore, ounce for ounce, apple juice has approximately 30 percent *more* calories than soda and has approximately 10 percent *more* sugar content.

"The efforts by the Food Police and other activists targeting soft drinks and soda machines as the culprit for childhood obesity are not only based on junk science, but also patronize American consumers who already have sufficient information to make their own decisions regarding beverage consumption," said Paul Kamenar, WLF's Senior Executive Counsel.

WLF is also monitoring the recent threat by activists and class action attorneys to file a novel lawsuit in Massachusetts against the soft drink industry because soda vending machines in high schools allegedly make kids obese. WLF intends to oppose the suit in court after it is filed.

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For further information, contact Paul Kamenar, WLF Senior Executive Counsel, at 202-588-0302. WLF's FDA comments are posted on its website at [www.wlf.org](http://www.wlf.org).