

Policy Assessment for: Menu Labeling of Foods and Beverages in WI Restaurants

Exist in Wisconsin Already:

Yes No

Comments:

- Restaurants would be required to provide detailed nutrition information for individual menu items
- The Wisconsin Restaurant Association (WRA) has the Healthy Lifestyles Initiative, which searchable Dining Guide with healthy categories to help customers identify restaurants with these items. (examples of categories include availability of half or lighter portions, fruits and vegetables as substitutions, and availability of nutrition information for menu items.)
<http://www.wirestaurant.org/news/obesity/dining.htm>
- WRA encourages restaurants to voluntarily provide customers with as much nutrition information as they reasonably can.

Rationale for Legislation:

- Attaching the Obesity Epidemic: The Potential Health Benefit of Providing Nutrition Information in Restaurants. American Journal of Public Health, 2006; 96:9:1669-1675.

Conclusion/results:

- Study participants underestimated the calorie levels of less healthful items
- The addition of calorie and nutrient information for dinner house items influenced attitudes, intentions, and choices
- Purchase intention and choice decreased for less-healthy items

Other States/Communities with Similar Legislation:

- **California:** SB120; pending in 2007 (passed Senate)
 - Menu labeling legislation that would require chain restaurants (defined as having 10 or more franchises) to provide nutrition information on menus/menu boards. Such information would have to include the total number of calories, total number of grams of saturated fat and trans fat, total number of carbohydrates, total number of milligrams of sodium. Restaurants using only menu boards may limit nutrition information listed to the total number of calories per item if the additional nutrition information is made available to consumer in writing upon request
 - Nutrition information would have to be listed next to each item on the menu in a size and typeface similar to the other information about each menu item.
 - On or after January 2009, a food facility that violates this chapter, is punishable by a fine of not less than \$50 or more than \$500 for each violation

Other States/Communities with Similar Legislation:

- **Washington, D.C.:** B139, Menu Education and Labeling Act of 2007 (pending)
 - Under the legislation chain restaurants (with 10 or more locations nationally) would be required to provide the following information for food items as usually sold: calories, grams of saturated and trans fats, grams of carbohydrates, and milligrams of sodium.
 - The legislation mandates that such information would be in violation if not withing 20% of nutrition analysis
 - The city in not to be required to test food items to verify the accuracy of nutritional listings; provided that the council may request franchisers or corporate owners of chain restaurants to provide documentation of accuracy tof the nutrition information being provided to the patrons.
- **Hawaii:** HB54; pending in 2007
 - Directs franchise food establishments to maintain nutritional information on each of its standard menu items, and to have the information readily available and provide the information to the public upon request.
 - Nutritional information shall be provided by means of an in-store brochure, booklet, kiosk, or other device that is easily accessible to customers.
 - The retail food establishment shall also inform customers of the availability of this information through signage.

Other Important Resources/Notes:

- Wisconsin Restaurant Association's stance on Menu Labeling:
<http://www.wirestaurant.org/news/obesity/menu.htm>

Potential Legislative Language:

None drafted at this time