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AFFI Lauds Legislation Expanding School Snack Program

McLean, Va. – The [American Frozen Food Institute](#) (AFFI) today expressed support for child nutrition reauthorization legislation introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives that includes language to expand the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) to allow schools to serve a greater range of fruits and vegetables, including frozen.

Introduced by the House Education and Workforce Committee, the “Improving Child Nutrition and Education Act of 2016” authorizes all federal child nutrition programs. The bill contains a provision that expands USDA’s FFVP to allow schools to serve all forms of fruits and vegetables – fresh, frozen, canned and dried as snacks. Currently the program restricts schools to serving only fresh produce.

“AFFI commends the members of the House Education and Workforce Committee for leading efforts to expand USDA’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program,” said AFFI Interim President Joseph Clayton. “This expansion will help enhance childhood nutrition and promote healthy eating habits while giving schools year-round access to the widest possible variety of healthy and affordable fruits and vegetables in all forms, including frozen.

“As confirmed by [Frozen Food Foundation](#)-commissioned nutritional studies conducted by the [Universities of Georgia](#) (UGA) and [California-Davis](#) (UC Davis), frozen fruits and vegetables are as rich in nutrients, and often more so, than fresh-stored produce,” said Clayton.

AFFI and a coalition of more than 50 allied trade associations and fruit and vegetable producers recently [sent a letter](#) to leadership of the House Education and the Workforce Committee stressing that USDA’s own 2015 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend that Americans eat more fruits and vegetables, regardless of the form, and expanding the FFVP would align the program with the agency’s recommendations.

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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 and beverage 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.