

CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 40002 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 • (360) 753-6780 • www.governor.wa.gov

September 15, 2005

John Manfreda, Administrator
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB)
ATTN: Notice No. 41
P.O. Box 14412
Washington DC 20044-4412

Dear Mr. Manfreda:

I am writing to express my support for changes in labeling to require manufacturers of beer, wine and distilled spirits to include product information. This requirement will allow consumers to make informed choices about what they drink and the quantity.

We share a concern about our nation's health. Certain medical conditions, including diabetes and obesity, have risen to epidemic proportions. These and other documented conditions are significantly impacted by nutritional choices. It is critical that people know what they are putting into their bodies so they can make informed decisions and identify potential allergens.

Requiring mandatory label information that defines, in plain language, a standard serving size (as used in the *Dietary Guidelines*) and that includes nutritional information – the calories, amount of fat, carbohydrates and protein – would certainly be beneficial. Food labels already play a critical role in identifying potential allergens and would do the same here. Access to straightforward information helps eliminate confusion and provides a way to compare products at the point of purchase. Because this information is factual, I also encourage you to allow manufacturers to include it on their products now, on a voluntary basis, rather than hold off until the rulemaking process is completed.

I believe that, as possible and when available, we have a responsibility to help our citizens make appropriate decisions about the foods and beverages they consume. I appreciate that TTB is seeking input on these proposals and it is my hope that they receive favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor

cc: Frank Foote, Director, Regulatory and Rulings Division, TTB