



PRESS RELEASE

Groups support voluntary alcohol serving facts labeling decision

For immediate release: May 30, 2013

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Washington, DC—The National Consumers League (NCL), The Consumer Federation of America (CFA), and Shape Up America! (SUA) today expressed their support for a decision by the Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) at the Department of the Treasury to allow voluntary serving facts statements on alcoholic beverages. However, the groups also urged TTB to finalize its long delayed regulation on the issue and ultimately require alcoholic beverages to carry serving facts labels.

“Nutrition labeling is an important tool for consumers looking to make informed decisions about consumption. Complete information is especially important today, when so many adults are either overweight or obese,” said Barbara Moore, President and CEO of Shape Up America! While nutrition labeling is mandatory on most food and beverages, it is not currently required on alcoholic beverages, a loophole consumer groups have long been working to remedy.

The decision issued by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) at the Department of the Treasury comes in response to earlier government action against Four Loko, a popular alcoholic beverage that originally included caffeine. As part of an agreement reached several months ago with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the maker of Four Loko was required to apply to TTB for permission to include an alcohol facts panel on their product. “We are pleased that TTB has decided to allow the makers of alcoholic products to voluntarily provide consumers with essential nutrition and alcohol content information, information that is sorely lacking in the marketplace. We see this move as a step in the right direction,” said Sally Greenberg, the Executive Director of the National Consumers League.

For over a decade, consumer groups have been requesting alcohol labeling, which would include both alcohol and nutrition facts, as well as recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines regarding moderate drinking, a goal complicated by the fact that while the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) oversees most consumable products, alcohol is overseen by TTB. “While we recognize the challenges inherent in developing new labeling, and see this as a good first step, we are somewhat troubled that TTB has decided to allow voluntary labeling rather than moving forward with long delayed rulemaking regarding mandatory labeling,” said Chris Waldrop, Director of the Food Policy Institute at Consumer Federation of America. “Consumer groups will continue to push for mandatory, standardized and comprehensive labels on all alcoholic products.”

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About the National Consumers League

The National Consumers League, founded in 1899, is America's pioneer consumer organization. Our mission is to protect and promote social and economic justice for consumers and workers in the United States and abroad. For more information, visit www.nclnet.org.

About Shape Up America!

Shape Up America! was founded in 1994 by former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop to raise awareness of the health effects of obesity and to educate the public, health professionals and policymakers on proven ways to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. The organization maintains an award-winning website – www.shapeup.org – accessed by more than 100,000 visitors each month.

About CFA

Consumer Federation of America is an association of nearly 300 nonprofit consumer organizations that was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education.