

Caterer and Hotelkeeper/LACA “School Meals Matter” campaign

To the Party Leader of the incoming Government,

To safeguard the future prosperity of the nation, we must encourage our children to embrace a healthier lifestyle as part of their general school education.

Our country faces an obesity crisis that will place an unsupportable burden on the National Health Service. According to the latest Health Survey for England (HSE) data, 27% of children aged 2-10 in England are overweight or obese, and of these, 14% are obese.

Meanwhile, 60% of men, 50% of women and 25% of children are expected to be clinically obese by 2050 (source: Foresight report, Tackling Obesities: Future Choices project, October 2007).

A well-funded school meals service can contribute significantly to reducing these figures.

Placing a healthy lifestyle at the heart of school life equips children to make informed and positive food choices and thus achieve their full potential, both physically and mentally.

As well as having a positive impact upon the NHS, this will benefit the hospitality industry, by ensuring a pipeline of people who engage with food, enjoy the pleasures of eating out of home and wish to work in the food service industry.

We believe that the incoming Government must make a clear commitment to invest in the future of school catering.

We therefore urge you to pledge your full support for the continuation of the school meals service, by:

- Recognising that the school catering industry is an important sector, one worth over £1b to the UK economy and employing more than 100,000 workers;
- Confirming that the transitional school lunch grant (due to end in March 2011) will continue under your Government;
- Further confirming that this grant will provide 10p per meal food cost funding as a minimum;
- Committing to free meals for all children living in officially defined poverty.

Continued funding of the school meals service will help our children lay the foundations of a lifetime of healthy eating, and help safeguard the future of the UK hospitality industry.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Lewis,
Editor, Caterer and Hotelkeeper

Beverley Baker
Chair, LACA

PLEASE SIGN HERE _____

Name _____

Occupation _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Visit www.caterersearch.com/SMM to get the latest campaign news and sign the petition online. Alternatively, please return this letter to School Meals Matter, Caterer and Hotelkeeper, Quadrant House, The Quadrant, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5AS. Should you wish to withhold your address, please sign the letter and attach your address on a separate sheet.