

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6659

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As of January 30, 2008

**Title:** An act relating to the availability of nutrition information.

**Brief Description:** Addressing the availability of nutrition information.

**Sponsors:** Senators Prentice and Brandland.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Health & Long-Term Care: 1/31/08.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

**Staff:** Rhoda Donkin (786-7465)

**Background:** Obesity, heart disease, diabetes and other chronic illnesses related to diet have become leading public health concerns in this country. As the rates of conditions have increased, so have the amount of food dollars spent, and calories consumed in restaurants. It is estimated that on average, American's spend up to half of their food dollars, and consume up to a third of their daily calories away from home.

People can monitor the nutritional content of what they eat partly because of federal legislation in 1990 that required food manufacturers to provide it on nearly all packaged goods. However, restaurants were exempt from this labeling requirement. The restaurants industry has argued it is too difficult to analyze nutritional content because of the variability of portion size, formulation, and other characteristics of restaurant food products. Public health advocates are concerned that because of widespread obesity and chronic disease, consumers need to know what they are eating when they dine out.

**Summary of Bill:** Restaurants with 25 or more locations in the country, under the same trade name, must provide nutrition information in one or more methods: on the menu or in writing at the point of sale, on standard food item packaging, at the counter, table tent, or tray liner, on a poster, brochure, or in some form of electronic medium. Nutritional information includes total calories, grams of trans and saturated fat, carbohydrates, and milligrams of sodium.

A restaurant otherwise required to provide nutritional information under this act, is exempt from doing so if it provides the total number of calories per standard food item in a size and type face similar to other information on the printed menu or menu board.

A list of establishments are exempted from the labeling requirement including certified farmers markets, commissaries, licensed health care facilities, mobile support units, restricted food service facilities, temporary facilities, public and private school cafeterias.

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Local boards of health or health districts are preempted from adopting an ordinance, rule, policy, regulation or permit requirement regarding mandatory menu labeling or nutritional information disclosure at restaurants.

The act expires January 1, 2013.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 25, 2008.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.