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COLORADO BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION ADOPTS NEW SCHOOL VENDING MACHINE POLICY

The Board of Directors of the Colorado Beverage Association has unanimously adopted new recommended guidelines for the sale of beverages through vending machines on school premises. The guidelines are based on and are consistent with guidelines announced by Susan K. Neely, president and chief executive officer of the American Beverage Association in a major address made to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) in Seattle, Washington on August 17, 2005.

The recommended guidelines were developed to promote lower-calorie and nutritious beverages to be made available in schools through vending machines, and include a more limited availability of carbonated soft drinks. The guidelines are tailored differently for the level of school:

Elementary Schools: only bottled water and 100 percent juice.

Middle Schools: only nutritious and lower-calorie beverages (such as bottled water, 100 percent juice, sports drinks, no-calorie soft drinks, and low-calorie juice drinks). There would be no full-calorie soft drink or full-calorie juice drinks with 5 percent or less juice until after school hours.

High Schools: a variety of beverage choices, such as bottled water, 100 percent juice, sports drinks, and juice drinks. There would be no more than 50 percent of the vending machine selections that would be soft drinks.

In announcing the new recommended guidelines, Colorado Beverage Association Vice President, Sam Thayer of Denver Coca-Cola, called on both beverage producers and school officials to adopt the recommendations as soon as possible. “The success of these guidelines rests upon the speedy and voluntary implementation by the individual companies and local school officials,” said Thayer. Thayer added, “Where there is an existing contract in place, we encourage the schools and companies to revisit the terms to see if they can be modified to include these recommended guidelines.”

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These recommended guidelines are consistent with and follow the legislative intent of the Colorado General Assembly embodied in SB04-103 which was enacted in 2004. Colorado Beverage Association Executive Director, Dick Brown, said, “SB04-103 was built upon voluntary joint efforts between school officials and their contract partners to increase the selection options for students over time.” Brown added, “The Association supported SB04-103 and worked with Senator Paula Sandoval, the sponsor, to craft a law that would work. The new guidelines build upon SB04-103 and reflect the industry’s commitment to do its part by providing beverage options that are the most appropriate for the schools and students.”

The Colorado Beverage Association represents companies that manufacture and distribute nonalcoholic beverages in Colorado. The members provide a wide variety of beverage products to the public throughout Colorado, including bottled water, juice, teas, dairy-based beverages, sports drinks, juice drinks, and full, reduced and no-calorie soft drinks. For more information about the Association and its members, visit the Association website at www.coloradobeverage.org.

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