



California Optometric Association

www.coavision.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sean South, Senior Health
Community and Regulatory Advocate
(916) 441-3990

**BILL REQUIRING RESTAURANTS TO DISCLOSE NUTRITIONAL
INFORMATION ON MENUS PASSES STATE SENATE**

**CA Optometric Association, Co-Sponsor of Legislation that Improves the Health of
California Families, Thanks Senator Alex Padilla for Leadership on SB 120**

SACRAMENTO, May 31, 2007— A bill requiring restaurant chains in California to post nutritional information on menus passed the State Senate today—earning accolades from the California Optometric Association, co-sponsors of the legislation. COA-member optometrists have hailed the bill as the next step to address the obesity and diabetes epidemics that are threatening the health and vision of California children and adults.

“COA member doctors are very encouraged that this bill that would allow California families to make more informed decisions about the food they consume is advancing in the State Legislature,” said association President Robert Theaker, O.D. “As the leading primary eye care provider in the state, optometrists diagnose thousands of cases of diabetes in Californians each year. Our association is committed to doing all we can encourage the people of our state to live healthier lifestyles and we applaud Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Paicoma) for his leadership in authoring Senate Bill 120.”

SB 120 would require restaurant chains with 10 or more outlets in the state to post nutritional information next to items on menus and menu boards. Such clearly displayed information will help consumers make informed choices at restaurants and is an important strategy for reducing obesity and protecting the public’s health.

Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness for American adults between the ages of 20 and 74, with the American Diabetes Association estimating that 12,000-24,000 people in the U.S. lose their vision to diabetic retinopathy each year.

The COA has created a strategic partnership with the American Diabetes Association (ADA) and our member optometrists work directly in Latino communities throughout California to diagnose and treat diabetes for those who lack avenues to care. On average, Hispanic/Latino Americans are 1.5 times more likely to have diabetes than non-Hispanic whites of similar age.

The association also has supported bills to improve the quality of the food in our schools and to make our children more active at school. In partnership with the State Legislature, Governor Schwarzenegger, has led the effort to combat childhood and adult obesity in California: establishing the toughest school nutrition reforms in the nation; hosting the first-ever Governor’s Summit on Health, Nutrition & Obesity; and enacting key recommendations of the 2006 *California Obesity Prevention Plan: A Vision for Tomorrow, Strategic Actions for Today*.

###

“Setting the standard in eyecare”