



REMARKS FROM SUPERVISOR KEN YEAGER

Good afternoon. Thank you for coming. I am very excited about what we accomplished today.

Childhood obesity is one of the most pressing issues of our time, and this new ordinance gives parents another tool for making healthy choices for their children. Some people may say that this ordinance bans restaurants from giving out toys, but that is just not true. This ordinance prevents restaurants from preying on children's love of toys to peddle high-calorie, high-fat, high-sodium kids' meals.

Restaurants encourage children to choose specific menu items by linking them with free toys and other incentive items. The restaurant industry spends hundreds of millions of dollars buying these toys that are too often used to sell meals that can make children obese. Indeed, a 2008 study by the Center for Science in the Public Interest showed that 10 out of 12 meals that exceeded the recommended caloric limits for children came with toys.

Further research shows that parents frequently make purchases based on requests made by their children. This ordinance simply levels the playing field by taking away the incentive to choose fatty, sugary foods over healthier options.

This ordinance breaks the link between unhealthy food and prizes. Under this ordinance, restaurants are still permitted to give out toys. This ordinance merely imposes very specific, common-sense nutrition standards for children's meals that are linked to these incentives.

This ordinance does not attack toys. Obviously, toys, in and of themselves, do not make children obese. But it is unfair to parents and children to use toys to capture the tastes of children when they are young to get them hooked on eating high-sugar, high-fat foods early in life.

Childhood obesity has reached a crisis level. Too many tax dollars are going toward covering the skyrocketing costs associated with escalating levels of obesity. Even worse, the latest generation of children may be the first to live shorter lives than their parents.

While there are many factors contributing to the childhood obesity epidemic, this issue is a critical gap that needs to be addressed, so the County acted. Although this ordinance will only affect restaurants in the unincorporated areas of the County, we hope that other municipalities, counties and states will follow suit in helping to level the playing field for parents by passing similar ordinances and legislation.

Thank you. I would now be happy to respond to questions.