

The Government has a Right to Control What We Eat

### **The Government has a Right to Control What We Eat**

The laws and regulations being implemented by the government of food and diet activities of individuals are putting government in a place where it does not belong: Our Kitchen. The new efforts of the government are aimed to change the perception and behaviour of people towards the disadvantages of eating unhealthy. The government claims that these laws will help ensure the healthy and safety of the people from the growing maniac of obesity and other diseases linked to it. Instead of creating more laws the government needs to start respecting the choice of the people.

Our grocery carts are already very much controlled by the government, more than we realise. The food products that are cheap and most readily available have long been affected by severe government intrusion. Looking back at history since World War II, the federal government has been endorsing the production of cheap sweeteners found in junk foods and sodas by providing corn and soybean growers with profitable farm financial support. Controlling the food options of people is intruding into their personal lives. On one side, government claims that people have the right to healthcare and they should be allowed to get the right healthcare program regardless of their religion or race without any pressure but on the other hand what we eat is being governed by the politics (Spector, 2010).

No matter whether the food we eat is healthy or unhealthy, government what-so-ever has no right to intervene into our personal lives. Government has a role in society and they should work for the common good of people, however does not control the actions of the people until and unless they are harmful for others. What we eat is our personal choice and thus provides no

harm to any other individual of the society. On the other hand, it is not an easy task to change public's perception about a bag of chips and a soda can.

Indeed, several steps taken by the government in order to reduce the use of trans fats in food have been very successful and appreciated by several health care providers. The use of trans fats was a reason behind 6 to 19 percent of heart attacks in USA only. Getting rid of one ingredient may not be very beneficial for overcoming many health diseases but it was a good start that has spread throughout the chain of large and small restaurants globally along with some fast food restaurants as well and at the end all the efforts sum up to be working for the end of obesity in these western countries. What can the government do then? The government has long ago taken an appropriate step to inform the consumers with the amount of fats, calories and other ingredients in their food, whether eating fast food or at a fast food restaurant (iVillage, 2010).

Consumers are aware of what is present in their food and in what quantity and will also help them decide whether the food is good for their health or not. This will provide awareness amongst the consumers but at the end will not control their choice of food. By forcing the food makers to ensure less usage of salt in food and adding taxes on sodas and drinks will only propose controversial measures. However, people have not taken the idea of government controlling food very positively as a matter of fact this issue has become the most burning topic of debate amongst human rights department and the government. The government has changed from that of protecting the rights of people to a government ready to mandate what we eat.

Government does not to tell us what is right for us to eat or not but can provide proper information so that people have the knowledge themselves and are able to decide on their own. Everyone does realise that fast food chains are not the pillars of healthy eating and their

advertising budgets used to gear youngsters to be hooked to their high cholesterol and fattening menus is in billions of dollars, however, in the final analysis, proper eating habits should not be ordered by the government but rather understood on our own (Morgan, 2010).

The argument presented in draft 1 of this paper, discusses the health issues being raised by the government to the liability of protecting the rights of people to choose with freedom also discusses the usage of tobacco and alcohol as a measures of control by the government. The government had raised the point of successfully controlling the usage of tobacco and alcohol which was another major issue in the healthcare and safety of people. It took large public policies and extreme measures to regulate the usage however more severe measures are needed to be taken to move people beyond individual behaviour choices such as food.

But like tobacco rules and regulations, anti-obesity and healthcare policies frameworks are facing pushback from the industries as well as resistance from those who think government has no right to rule what we eat. It is however, debatable whether we have a legislative right to be thin or fat. Governments have failed to compare the tobacco usage and food intake together as it has been researched that tobacco is the single product that has no redeeming quality however the greasiest fries have some nutritional values in them.

In the midst of all this, health activities are nonetheless counterfeiting ahead. Metropolitan cities which have been facing the highest rate of obesity have started to take steps while controlling the food items that will go in the deals offered by fast food restaurants. Even schools have been ordered to provide healthier foods for students and increase physical activities. The beverage industry counters that there are no evidences of reducing obesity by taxing soda.

The problem remains in the overall calories consumption to his daily physical activity, so targeting a single product in the industry is useless (Rowell, 2012).

According to the survey conducted for draft 1, it was concluded that majority of people believe that government should have no say in what we eat or what we cook at our homes. Everyone accepts the fact that the raise in obesity is alarming and has caused many other health issues; however the choice at the end is to be given to the consumer himself and not any legislation.

## References

- iVillage. (2010, March 17). *Can the Government Make Us Eat Better?* Retrieved August 14, 2012, from iVillage:  
<http://www.blogger.com/frame.php?url=http://www.ivillage.com/can-government-make-us-eat-better/124689>
- Morgan, C. (2010, April 13). *Should The Government Control What We Can and Can Not Eat?* Retrieved August 14, 2012, from BlogHer: <http://www.blogger.com/should-government-control-what-we-can-and-can-not-eat>
- Rowell, A. (2012). *Don't Worry (It's Safe to Eat): "The True Story of GM Food, BSE and Foot and Mouth"*. United States: CRC Press.
- Spector, H. (2010, April 8). *Can we legislate ourselves thinner with rules on junk food, drinks? Fighting Fat*. Retrieved August 14, 2012, from Northeast Ohio:  
[http://www.blogger.com/frame.php?url=http://www.cleveland.com/fighting-fat/index.ssf/2010/04/can\\_we\\_legislate\\_ourselves\\_thinner\\_with\\_rules\\_on\\_junk\\_food\\_drinks.html](http://www.blogger.com/frame.php?url=http://www.cleveland.com/fighting-fat/index.ssf/2010/04/can_we_legislate_ourselves_thinner_with_rules_on_junk_food_drinks.html)