

**THE SOCIAL
& HEALTH
RESEARCH
CENTER**



Chief, Regulations and Procedures Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau

Board Members:

Attn: Notice No. 41
P.O. Box 14412
Washington, DC 20044-4412

Ernest Valdez

Francisco D. Velasquez

Re: Notice No. 41

September 23, 2005

Elizabeth Leal

Rolando Medina, M.D.

To Whom It May Concern:

Gilbert Ramirez, Ph.D.

I direct a school-based intervention program targeting Mexican-American children in inner city San Antonio that are at risk for Type II diabetes. My entire career has centered in the clinical area of diabetes. Our state's largest expenditure is health, and diabetes is the illness with the most rapid growth rate.

Hector Ortiz

Roberto P. Treviño, M.D.

Between 2001 and 2004, diabetes rates grew by 55 percent. In 2004 we estimated 1.6 million people living in Texas had diagnosed and undiagnosed diabetes. The key is prevention. A large national study, the Diabetes Prevention Program, reported that high-risk individuals who practiced healthy lifestyles were able to reduce diabetes risk by 58 percent.

I am writing to urge the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau's (TTB) to require a mandatory "Alcohol Facts" panel on the labels of all alcoholic beverages, regardless of product category. I would also recommend that while TTB works to implement a final rule making, the agency allow manufacturers to include labeling information on a voluntary basis that provides alcohol, calorie, and allergen information.

It is extremely important for people with diabetes and at risk for diabetes, who choose to drink alcohol, have complete information about the contents of these beverages. Not only is alcohol a significant source of calories but excessive alcohol consumption makes it difficult to ingest sufficient nutrients within an individual's daily calorie allotment and to maintain a healthy weight.

Having improved labeling information about the alcohol content will also make it easier for consumers to follow the Dietary Guidelines' advice on moderate drinking. At a time when health care is at the top of the political agenda, mandating an "Alcohol Facts" panel on the labels of all alcoholic beverages is a simple way to advance important public health goals. That is why I urge TTB to take action now.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Roberto P. Treviño, M.D.
Director

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