



Consumer Federation of America

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Consumer Federation of America Applauds Appointment of Mike Taylor as Deputy Commissioner for Foods

Consumer Federation of America today applauded the appointment of Michael R. Taylor as Deputy Commissioner for Foods at the Food and Drug Administration. Mr. Taylor will be responsible for developing and implementing a prevention based strategy for food safety, implementing new food safety legislation, and ensuring the accuracy and clarity of food labels.

"The creation of the deputy commissioner position is an important first step toward providing FDA food-related issues the leadership necessary to implement the major reform legislation now moving through Congress. Mike Taylor played a major role in delineating the changes needed for FDA to carry out a modern preventive food safety program," said Chris Waldrop, Director of the Food Policy Institute at CFA, "We think he is well qualified to lead the food programs as they move into a new era."

However, the FDA is also about to take on responsibility for tobacco regulation. Drug and medical device regulation continue to be demanding activities absorbing much of the agency's leadership and resources. The principal deputy commissioner will attend to drug issues. Food safety and nutrition remain secondary concerns within the agency.

CFA believes that securing the level of leadership, funding and visibility needed to implement the new FDA Reform legislation quickly and effectively, requires providing a separate organizational structure for food issues. President Obama should ask Congress to create a separate agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, a Federal Food Safety Administration, led by a presidentially appointed Administrator of Food Safety. Tobacco, drugs and medical devices would remain in a Federal Drug Administration and continue to have a presidentially appointed Commissioner. CFA continues to believe that FDA will have a hard time providing an adequate level of public health protection until food responsibilities are removed from the current FDA structure and focused in a new Food Safety Administration

Mr. Taylor served as Administrator of the Food Safety and Inspection Service in the USDA from 1994-97. He previously was an attorney in the office of chief counsel of the FDA before entering private law practice.

"Mike Taylor brings a strong commitment to improving the public health to his new role and we look forward to working with him to strengthen FDA's capacity to protect the public from unsafe foods," Waldrop said.