



Consumer Federation of America

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Consumer Federation of America Welcomes the Appointment of New FDA Commissioner

Consumer Federation of America welcomes the appointment of Dr. Margaret Hamburg and Dr. Joshua Sharfstein as commissioner and principal deputy commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Their resumes are extremely impressive and both are familiar with the FDA's failure to protect the public from foodborne illness.

We hope that these talented and caring individuals will bring a new era to the FDA. We especially hope that they bring to their new positions the recognition that, although food comes first in the agency's name, it has been last on the agenda of past leaders. As a result, there have been a series of inexplicable foodborne illness outbreaks over the past several years. The agency has not only been unable to prevent outbreaks but has failed to identify the cause of outbreaks and stop their spread in a timely manner. Neither Agency nor departmental leaders have been willing to institute the substantive changes needed to reduce the likelihood of future outbreaks. Public confidence in the agency and the safety of the food supply has, understandably, plummeted.

Drs. Hamburg and Sharfstein are well qualified to take on what is sure to be a formidable task. We look forward to working with them to protect the public from foodborne illness and to rebuild confidence in the safety of the food supply. We hope to be able to salute them for taking charge quickly and implementing the changes that are needed. We will work with them to assure they have not just the funding but the statutory authority necessary to do their jobs.

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Consumer Federation of America is a non-profit association of 300 consumer groups, representing more than 50 million Americans. It was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, education and advocacy. The Food Policy Institute at CFA works to promote a safer, healthier and more affordable food supply.