

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District
REGULAR MEETING ORDER OF BUSINESS**

333 South Beaudry Avenue, Board Room
1 p.m., Tuesday, September 9, 2003

Resolution Prohibiting The Use of Irradiated Food (Noticed July 22, 2003)

Whereas, On May 29, 2003, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that irradiated meat may, for the first time, be used by local school districts in their federally subsidized lunch programs, and the USDA indicated that districts will be able to, but not mandated to, purchase irradiated meat as of January 2004;

Whereas, The sale of irradiated meat has been available to the public since 1999 but has not been received with consumer confidence nor has it been permitted in our public school meal programs until this time;

Whereas, There have been no comprehensive, long-term studies done on humans regarding the health effects associated with the consumption of irradiated foods as a regular part of their diet;

Whereas, Many consumer groups strongly oppose the use of irradiated foods, citing research that this process destroys essential vitamins and can result in the formation of chemicals known or suspected to cause cancer and birth defects, including benzene, methyl ethyl ketone, toluene and methanol;

Whereas, Irradiation can also result in the formation of chemicals, called cyclobutanones which have never been found to occur naturally in any food, and have recently been associated with cancer;

Whereas, There is a significant body of research that indicates consumption of irradiated foods is linked to or may promote chromosome aberrations, internal bleeding, reproductive dysfunction, cell toxicity, and other disorders in test animals;

Whereas, Young children are the most susceptible population to cumulative toxins, additives, and chemical/radioactive processes, and there is still controversy and debate in the medical and scientific communities as to acceptable levels of radiation and the long-term effects of radiation on food products;

Whereas, Even when successfully eliminating bacteria, the process of food irradiation does not inactivate the dangerous toxins that have already been produced by bacteria and remain in food even after the bacteria has been destroyed, such as in the case of C. botulinum;

Whereas, Irradiation does nothing to remove the carriers of pathogenic bacteria that contaminate

food, such as fecal matter, and by mitigating some of the dangers associated with unhygienic meat production and processing, may actually help perpetuate or even worsen the conditions that cause meat to be contaminated in the first place;

Whereas, Industry associations have been lobbying to eliminate all microbial testing of irradiated meat, removing the only method currently in use to detect contamination during meat processing, citing “financial disincentive” as justification thereof;

Whereas, Cooking meat to 160° Fahrenheit kills all of the bacteria that irradiation does, and also kills bacteria that may have contaminated meat through improper handling and storage, which irradiation will not destroy;

Whereas, Irradiation may also cause mutations in bacteria that could lead to potentially more resistant strains;

Whereas, The European Parliament, after careful and diligent investigation, has ruled not to expand the trading of irradiated foods to include meat and produce within the European Union due to the many unanswered questions regarding the health and safety effects of irradiation; and

Whereas, There is a strong commitment on the part of the Board of Education to provide nutritious and unadulterated foods to our students as health has a fundamental effect on an individual’s ability to learn; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles hereby prohibits the use of any and all irradiated food products in our Food Services lunch, breakfast and snack programs at all District school sites.