KING COUNTY

Signature Report

March 25, 2013

Resolution 13-07

Proposed No. 13-07.1

A RESOLUTION encouraging King County agencies and
institutions to continue efforts to promote healthy eating,
including implementing healthy food guidelines, endorsing
the National Salt Reduction Initiative, and urging the Food
and Drug Administration to modify policies related to
sodium.

WHEREAS, one in three American adults has high blood pressure, and
WHEREAS, high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, is the single largest
risk factor for cardiovascular disease ("CVD") mortality, accounting for forty-five
percent of all CVD deaths, and
WHEREAS, CVD is responsible for thirty-one percent of all deaths in the United
States. Each year, more than 600,000 Americans die of heart disease and more than
135,000 die of stroke, and
WHEREAS, heart disease and stroke are the second and third leading causes of
death in King County. In 2010, 3,444 King County residents died of CVD, including
heart disease, stroke and other vascular diseases, and
WHEREAS, fifty-five percent of King County residents are overweight or obese
and overweight and obesity are risk factors for high blood pressure, and
WHEREAS, twenty-four percent, or about 367,000, King County adults report they have been told they have high blood pressure by a doctor, nurse or other health professional, and

WHEREAS, a high amount of sodium in the diet has been linked to high blood pressure and may also have other harmful effects on health, including increased risk for stroke, heart failure and kidney disease, and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization now characterizes the evidence linking excess sodium intake to CVD as conclusive, and

WHEREAS, approximately nine out of ten persons in the United States consume more sodium than recommended, and

WHEREAS, Americans age twenty or older consume an average of 3,466 milligrams of sodium per day, which is about fifty-one percent above the recommended level and far exceeds the amount needed for good health, and

WHEREAS, the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans ("DGA") recommend that persons who are either hypertensive, diabetic, black, over fifty-one years of age or have chronic kidney disease, who are roughly seventy percent of the population, consume less than 1500 milligrams of sodium daily and recommend that the rest of the population, consume less than 2300 milligrams of sodium daily, and

WHEREAS, among menu items in King County sit-down and quick-service restaurants surveyed in 2010, the average sodium content of entrees was 1733 (± 965) milligrams, and

WHEREAS, in 2010, the Institute of Medicine) published a report that recommended that the generally recognized as safe (status of sodium be modified and
that the Food and Drug Administration ("FDA") regulate the amount of sodium permitted in foods. To date, the FDA has not taken action on these recommendations, and

WHEREAS, in 2011, the American Public Health Association unanimously passed a resolution that called on the FDA to begin regulating sodium in the food supply within one year and to establish a timetable for gradually reducing sodium in the food supply by seventy-five percent within ten years, and

WHEREAS, many countries have been working actively for years to reduce sodium in their food supplies and are far ahead of the United States in their efforts. For example, Finland began a campaign to reduce the consumption of sodium that included both public education and regulation in the 1970s. Sodium intake has decreased more than forty percent since then, resulting in an eighty percent decline in the mortality rate from heart disease and strokes, and

WHEREAS, because time is required to adjust taste perception in the general population, the reduction of recommended sodium levels should change over time, and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that if the population of the United States moved to an average intake of 1,500 milligrams of sodium per day there would be a twenty-five and six-tenths percent overall decrease in high blood pressure and $26.2 billion in health care savings, and

WHEREAS, seventy-seven percent of the sodium consumed in America comes from processed and restaurant foods, and

WHEREAS, the National Salt Reduction Initiative, which includes over forty national health organizations, cities and states, has issued its public commitment to promote gradual, achievable, substantive and measurable reductions in the sodium
content of packaged and restaurant foods by setting targets and monitoring progress through a transparent process. The Initiative’s goal is to reduce Americans’ sodium intake by twenty percent by 2014 through voluntary corporate commitments to lower sodium in packaged and restaurant food.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Health of King County:

A. The Board of Health encourages residents to take proactive steps to reduce the sodium in their diets as a way to decrease high blood pressure and other cardiovascular diseases in King County; and

B. The Board of Health continues to support King County policies and programs, including those in schools and childcare sites, to implement healthy food guidelines and procurement that meet the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans nutritional standards for sodium; and

C. The Board of Health endorses support of the National Salt Reduction Initiative; and

D. The Board of Health urges the Food and Drug Administration to:

1. Remove or modify the generally recognized as safe status of sodium,

2. Begin regulating the amount of sodium permitted in processed foods, and
3. Establish a schedule for the progressive lowering of sodium in food products over the next ten years.

Resolution 13-07 was introduced on and passed by the Board of Health on 3/21/2013, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Ms. Frisinger, Mr. Conlin, Ms. Patterson, Ms. Clark, Dr. Baker, Mr. McDermott and Dr. Delecki
No: 0
Excused: 4 - Ms. Lambert, Mr. Licata, Dr. Nicola and Dr. Danielson

BOARD OF HEALTH
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Joe McDermott, Chair

ATTEST:

Anne Noris, Clerk of the Board

Attachments: None