

**Center for Foodborne Illness Research & Prevention
Center for Science in the Public Interest – Consumer Federation of America
Consumers Union – Food & Water Watch – National Consumers League
The Pew Charitable Trusts – Safe Tables Our Priority**

July 21, 2010

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

As you work to develop the President's budget for Fiscal Year 2012, the undersigned organizations respectfully urge you to make the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) a major priority. Consistent funding increases over a sustained period of time are essential to restoring the agency's capacity to handle a rapidly growing list of complex public health responsibilities.

Our groups are particularly concerned about ensuring that the FDA is provided sufficient resources to address longstanding deficiencies in the agency's food safety programs and to bolster its capacities to prevent and rapidly respond to deadly foodborne illness outbreaks. The need is critical, especially as Congress considers new food safety legislation that would provide the FDA with important new authorities and responsibilities. Today's FDA faces severe resource constraints due to years of chronic underfunding and an exponential increase in the agency's public health responsibilities. Without significant resource infusions, the FDA will be unable to effectively carry out the new food safety responsibilities envisioned in the legislation and adequately protect the public health. As you begin to formulate your budgetary priorities for FY 2012, we respectfully request at least a twenty percent increase for the food safety programs at FDA over the FY11 budget.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Carol Tucker-Foreman
Founder, Safe Food Coalition

Patricia Buck
Center for Foodborne Illness Research & Prevention

Caroline Smith DeWaal
Center for Science in the Public Interest

Chris Waldrop
Consumer Federation of America

Ellen Bloom
Consumers Union

Wenonah Hauter
Food & Water Watch

Sally Greenberg
National Consumers League

Erik Olson
The Pew Charitable Trusts

Nancy Donley
Safe Tables Our Priority