



## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

March 19, 2012

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

I write to express my appreciation for your recent decision to allow schools participating in the National School Lunch Program to choose whether or not they receive ground beef that contains lean finely textured beef, also known as “pink slime.”

While this product may be profitable for the meat industry, it is the cause of significant and growing concern for consumers, who worry that this product is unsafe. Specifically, consumers are concerned that labels are not required for this product and products that contain it. This is a particular concern for parents whose children benefit from the National School Lunch Program.

In recent years, schools had no way to know what was in the ground beef that they served. Now, with your recent announcement, schools will have access to this important information and be able to make educated choices about what products to serve. I applaud your proactive leadership on this issue, and look forward to working with you further to protect the consumers’ right to know – and choose – the ingredients in the food they eat.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dianne Feinstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator