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SHAREHOLDERS COMMEND DINEEQUITY FOR TAKING SODAS OFF KIDS' MENUS

Owner of Applebee's and IHOP brands responds to calls for healthier beverage options for children

New York, NY, Monday, November 30th, 2015 - Shareholders of DineEquity, a leading company in casual and family dining and owner of the Applebee's and IHOP brands, are commending the company for its decision to remove sodas as the default beverage choice on its kids' menus.

The decision was heralded as an important step forward by shareholders and members of the [Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility](#) who have been engaging the company on its nutritional initiatives citing the financial and reputational risks of childhood obesity. With more than 3,600 Applebee's and IHOP restaurants in 18 countries, shareholders are confident that DineEquity's decision will have a positive impact on children's health.

DineEquity follows McDonald's, Wendy's, Subway, Chipotle, Arby's, and Panera which already dropped sugary drinks from their kids' menus, signaling that the fast food and casual dining industries are recognizing the health risks of maintaining these drinks as staple options on menus for children.

"We applaud DineEquity for this decision favoring more nutritious beverage options for children, as the company is signaling that it prioritizes children's health" said ICCR member Donna Meyer of Mercy Investment Services. "Implicit in the obvious health risks sugary drinks pose for kids is the reputational risk these unhealthy offerings carry for the company. As their investors, we are pleased to see them eliminate this risk, and view this move as a harbinger of future progress on health-related concerns."

Children's health advocacy groups [Moms Rising](#) and [Center for Science in the Public Interest](#) that have partnered with ICCR to promote these changes, were gratified by news of DineEquity's decision. The groups say that soda is not an appropriate beverage choice for children, given that sugary drinks contribute to diabetes, heart disease, obesity, tooth decay, and other health problems in children and adults. Drinking just one additional sugary drink every day increases a child's odds of becoming obese **by 60 percent**, according to research published in *The Lancet*.

Last November, ICCR members submitted a shareholder proposal to DineEquity management requesting that the Board of Directors issue a report, including a risk evaluation "to assess whether the scope, scale and pace of the company's nutritional initiatives are sufficient to prevent material impacts on the company's finances and operations due to public concerns about childhood obesity and public and

private initiatives to eliminate or restrict the fast food environment.” The resolution was later withdrawn as a result of a productive dialogue with the company.

In addition to urging the company to take sodas off kids’ menus, investors have been urging the company to join the Better Business Bureau’s [Children’s Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative](#) (CFBAI) a voluntary self-regulation program that calls for any food advertising directed to children 12 and under to promote healthier choices and lifestyles.

Continued Meyer, ***“Given children’s vulnerability to marketing messages, we view membership in CFBAI as a strong signal of a corporation’s commitment to ethical marketing practices and children’s health. We urge all the food-related companies we engage to join.”***

About the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR)

Currently celebrating its 44th year, ICCR is the pioneer coalition of active shareholders who view the management of their investments as a catalyst for change. Its 300 member organizations with over \$100 billion in AUM have an enduring record of corporate engagement that has demonstrated influence on policies promoting justice and sustainability in the world. www.iccr.org

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