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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Setting the Record Straight: The FDA, BPA, and Safety

NAMPA Clarifies Upcoming FDA Action: Administration Has Determined Safety of BPA for Food Packaging Applications; Settlement Only Requires FDA to Respond to NRDC Petition -- Not to Ban on BPA

Washington, D.C. (January 26, 2012) -- In recent weeks, various organizations and individuals, in numerous publications and oral comments, have made erroneous statements about the settlement reached between the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). The North American Metal Packaging Alliance, Inc. (NAMPA) is concerned that emotion may be distorting the facts resulting in misleading characterizations of the settlement and FDA's pending action may overwhelm the scientific and regulatory process in this important decision.

FDA has made a determination on the safety of bisphenol A (BPA). After a thorough review process, FDA updated its risk assessment on BPA in 2010. Since that time, FDA has invested millions of dollars into research on BPA, with the preliminary findings of these studies indicating that BPA is not a risk to humans of any age. FDA's action to approve BPA in its current uses, at current levels, is consistent with regulatory agencies representing the European Union, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Germany, and Canada. While NRDC may disagree with the conclusion reached by FDA in 2008 and 2010, the fact is the agency made a scientific evaluation and approved BPA's continued use in food packaging materials.

"Time after time when the comprehensive body of research on BPA is evaluated by unbiased scientific experts, the conclusion is the same -- that BPA does not pose any risk to infants, children, or adults from exposure through food contact applications," said Dr. John M. Rost, NAMPA Chairman.

FDA is required to provide a final decision on the NRDC petition, which requests action. It does not compel FDA to take an action, nor does it repudiate the agency's previous safety assessments. NRDC filed a petition in October 2008, urging FDA to promulgate a regulation prohibiting the use of BPA in food packaging. The settlement agreement reached between FDA and NRDC requires only that FDA issue a final decision to accept or reject the petition. FDA could comply with the legal settlement by simply notifying NRDC its petition would not be granted; no additional regulatory action is required.

Public policy on scientific matters should be guided by scientific facts and expertise, not political agendas and personal feelings. There are regulatory processes in place that are effective in reviewing food packaging materials. Agency reviews have ensured that decisions are based on relevant and high quality scientific research.

"FDA actions should not be guided by anyone's personal or political agendas," continued Dr. Rost. "Expert risk assessments, such as previously conducted by FDA, should guide policy actions. The fact remains that BPA-based epoxy coatings enable high temperature sterilization that eliminates the danger of food poisoning or contamination. There is no valid scientific reason to replace this effective, safe, and thoroughly tested packaging technology and potentially put consumers at risk from untested alternatives that do not provide the same level of performance and safety."

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About NAMPA

The North American Metal Packaging Alliance, Inc. and its members support sound science and trust the scientific review process that has protected our food supply for decades. For further information, visit www.metal-pack.org.