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For Immediate Release

NAMPA REPORTS NEW RESEARCH ON MEDIA COVERAGE SHOWS HOW FACTS ON BPA'S SAFETY ARE DISTORTED IN THE PRESS

-- British Study on Sensationalistic Media Reporting on Health Issues Explains Overhyped Response to BPA Hypertension Study --

Washington, D.C. (December 11, 2014) -- The surge in media coverage this week of a study published in the American Heart Association's journal, *Hypertension*, linking bisphenol A (BPA) exposure to a rise in blood pressure, is a prime example of the challenges identified in a study of journalists reporting on complex health studies. The North American Metal Packaging Alliance, Inc. (NAMPA) cites the findings of a British study comparing academic press releases and resulting news coverage as evidence of the media's overreliance on the PR departments of research institutions, which leads to overhyped and inaccurate conclusions.

"This study published in the [British Medical Journal](#) explains in part why coverage of BPA is so heavily biased in favor of the researchers, a situation that occurred just this week with a flawed study about BPA and blood pressure," stated Dr. John Rost, NAMPA Chairman. "Headline after headline continues to connect BPA to increased blood pressure despite the fact that the research in question clearly states that no statistically significant causal relationship exists. This is yet another example of reporters contributing to misinformation and confusion, by not asking key questions about these studies, such as whether or not they are actually relevant to human health."

Recognizing that the blood pressure study featured in *Hypertension* would have failed the majority of criteria established by the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) for use in evaluating research studies funded by the Agency, NAMPA produced the attached report card detailing the research's weaknesses.

A December 10 [Vox](#) article states the British study "assigns a large fraction of blame to the press shops at various research universities. The study found that releases from these offices often overhype the findings of their scientists – while journalists play along uncritically, parroting whatever showed up in their inbox that day." The article goes on to state that the study found over one-third of press releases from academic institutions contained "either exaggerated claims of causation (when the study itself only suggested correlation), unwarranted implications about animal studies for people, or unfounded health advice."

"The British research validates exactly what NAMPA has been reporting for years, and for the first time provides evidence of the challenge that exists in separating media hype from fact in the debate over BPA's safety," Rost continued. "It's especially disappointing when you consider the amount of coverage the blood pressure study received, while a new comprehensive assessment reaffirming BPA's safe use in

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canned foods by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, issued just days before, went largely unreported.”

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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.