

# Press



# Release

11 New Hempstead Road, New City, NY (845) 638-5100 Fax: (845) 638-5675 e-mail [legclerk@co.rockland.ny.us](mailto:legclerk@co.rockland.ny.us).

## For Immediate Release

Contact: Hon. Alden H. Wolfe (845) 638-5752  
Betsy Saetre, Media Contact (845) 638-5184

## County Legislature Passes Wolfe's Proposal to Restrict Use of Trans Fats at Local Food Establishments

**New City, NY (June 4, 2010)** – The Rockland County Legislature passed a local law at the June 1, 2010 meeting which will reduce the public's intake of harmful artificial trans fats by restricting their use in food items prepared or served at food establishments within Rockland County. "The Rockland County Healthy Heart Act" was introduced by County Legislator Alden H. Wolfe earlier this year and will not apply to food that is served directly to patrons in a manufacturer's original sealed package.

"I'm pleased that so many of my colleagues joined me in acknowledging the health risks posed by artificial trans fats," said Legislator Wolfe. "Presently, restaurant patrons and students have no way of knowing whether the food they are consuming contains artificial trans fats. This law doesn't affect choice, because right now there is none. We're still free to order those donuts or French fries, but with this law, they'll be less unhealthy for us."

Many restaurants and fast-food outlets use products containing artificial trans fats because of its shelf stability and to deep-fry foods like French fries and donuts, as oils containing trans-fats can be used many times over. However, these substances create certain health risks by increasing the risk of heart disease and stroke by raising the levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol and lowering the levels of HDL (good) cholesterol, as well as increasing the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Trans fats are created in an industrial process called hydrogenation, that adds hydrogen to liquid vegetable oil.

The American Heart Association, which issued a memorandum in support of Legislator Wolfe's proposal, recommends the virtual elimination of artificial trans fats to allow room for only naturally occurring trans fats, such as those found in milk, cattle and sheep. Wolfe also credited many restaurant owners for already having made the move to alternative products and expects that more will do so before the law formally takes effect on January 1, 2011, assuming that it is signed by the County Executive.

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