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**U.S. Department of Agriculture 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
Listening Session**

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**Comments by Cory Martin, Vice President of Government Relations,
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Good morning. I am Cory Martin, Vice President of Government Relations for the International Bottled Water Association (or IBWA).

IBWA represents all segments of the bottled water industry, including spring, artesian, mineral, sparkling, and purified bottled waters. Founded in 1958, IBWA member companies include domestic and international bottlers, distributors, and suppliers. IBWA represents small, medium and large companies, including many family-owned businesses.

Water, including tap, filtered and bottled, plays a vital role in supporting nutritional health. IBWA applauds the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for recognizing the importance of water in a healthy diet, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for promoting water in the "MyPlate MyWins" on-line nutrition guide.

IBWA supports the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) recommendation to identify, select and prioritize topics prior to beginning the guidelines formulation process. With this in mind, IBWA recommends that water be included as a topic for the Scientific Advisory Committee to consider when preparing the 2020 Guidelines. This will allow the Committee and the nation's best scientists and nutrition experts to consider relevant research on how water impacts healthy hydration among all ages and populations.

As mentioned in the NASEM reports, the Dietary Guidelines provide important nutritional and dietary information to promote health and prevent disease. There is strong evidence showing that drinking water is associated with a decrease in the incidence of obesity, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, and it can aid in weight management. In addition, USDA's National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey IV data show that seventy-five percent of children ages 4-8 failed to satisfy the daily recommended intake for water. Since the 2020 Guidelines will also focus on children from birth to 24 months, it is important to note that the development of chronic diseases start at an early age, and so do good drinking habits.

Because water is essential for the normal, healthy functioning of the human body, it simply would be impossible to have a healthy diet without adequate water consumption.

Yet, water is noticeably absent on the most prominent educational tool that the government uses to promote a healthy diet – the MyPlate nutritional guidance graphic. Along with dairy (specifically milk), which is another vital beverage choice, water should be included on MyPlate since it is critical to good health.

The importance of water in a healthy diet is recognized by governments throughout the world. Currently, 48 countries promote water consumption in their nutrition guidance graphics. For example, you can find water promoted in the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating, China's Food Pagoda, France's Food Stairs, Germany's Nutrition Circle, Japan's Spinning Top Food Guide, Spain's Food Pyramid, and the United Kingdom's Eatwell Guide. The U.S. should be a leader in promoting a healthy diet, which is why water consumption needs to be a topic in the 2020 Guidelines and included on the MyPlate nutrition graphic.

IBWA hopes that USDA and HHS will support a transparent process throughout the formulation of the 2020 Guidelines, provide ample opportunities for public input and comment, and recognize the importance that water plays in a healthy diet.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments this morning. IBWA looks forward to working with the Advisory Committee, and USDA and HHS staff, in preparation for the release of the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.