

# NHA/WASHINGTON

update\*

## DC Leader Needed

*Longtime health freedom champion Tom Harkin set to retire at end of 2013.*

In January, Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) announced that he will retire at the end of this year. As Harkin moves on to what we hope is a happy retirement, the health freedom movement loses a leader who has been instrumental in defending our right to take safe, natural dietary supplements.

However, when one door closes another door opens: Harkin's impending retirement means a new leader will take the reins. For one of our elected officials, Harkin's departure represents an opportunity to realize the will of the American people, to keep supplements affordable and accessible, and to optimize the health of our entire country with safe, natural nutrition.

### A Legacy of Health Freedom

In 1994 Congress passed the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA). The legislation was in response to an overwhelming public outcry and what many in Congress believed was a concerted effort by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to restrict the public's access to beneficial nutritional supplements. Tom Harkin was one reason why DSHEA came to be: The senator played a critical role in drafting this act. Over the years, he continued as an advocate of the supplement industry throughout many times of crisis.

Most recently, Harkin fought the New Dietary Ingredient (NDI) Draft Guidance for nutritional supplements. Recognizing the NDI guidance as a danger to the stronghold of DSHEA and to our health freedom, Senator

Harkin led a campaign that pointed out the draft's major flaws. Harkin's efforts culminated in a letter of protest to the FDA signed by 14 members of Congress. With his actions, leadership and letter, Harkin channeled the collective will of 150,000 consumers who



commented on the NDI guidelines, along with millions more who take supplements every day. Harkin's actions are an example of what should be the role of every elected official in our nation—to represent and fight for the wishes of the people.

### A Void to be Filled

Where would NDI be if Harkin had not been there to fight it? Would NDI be firmly in place in its worst-case scenario, in which hundreds of supplements would be pulled from health food store shelves while dragging nutritional advancements to a screeching halt?

Unfortunately, NDI is still on the FDA's radar. In a year's time, NDI may still be looming over the nutritional

supplement industry—and over the consumers who rely on dietary supplements to maintain their well-being.

Even if NDI remains on the back burner (at least for the time being), a new and different attack on the health freedom now enjoyed by Americans could be imminent. But by the end of 2013, we will no longer have Senator Tom Harkin fighting to protect our rights in Congress.

Without strong elected leadership like that Harkin has shown over the past several decades, the enemies of health freedom may gain an advantage and finally succeed in taking away our God-given right to safe, healthful nutritional supplements. Unless the voice of the American people is represented in Congress, the FDA may seize even more power for its self-serving agenda. That is why we must find a new champion to carry on Harkin's worthy legacy.

Could a senator from your state be our next health freedom leader?

There's only one way to find out. Contact your elected officials and let them know about Harkin's retirement. Urge your elected officials to fill the void that Harkin will leave behind. Let the people elected to represent your interests know that by leading the health freedom movement, they will be representing not only your wishes but those of the 150,000,000 Americans who depend on dietary supplements for their health and vitality.

Visit [www.nha2013.com](http://www.nha2013.com), where you can find additional information and tools that can help you contact your elected officials. For the sake of health freedom, join the NHA today! ❖

\*This editorial is a public service announcement sponsored by the Nutritional Health Alliance (NHA).