



# RESPONSE TO PETITION RÉPONSE À LA PÉTITION

PREPARE IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH MARKING "ORIGINAL TEXT" OR "TRANSLATION"  
PRÉPARER EN ANGLAIS ET EN FRANÇAIS EN INDIQUANT "TEXTE ORIGINAL" OU "TRADUCTION"

PETITION NO./N° DE LA PÉTITION  
412-2505

BY / DE  
Mr. Butt (Mississauga—Streetsville)

DATE  
April 30, 2014

RESPONSE BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH  
RÉPONSE DE LA MINISTRE DE LA SANTÉ

Signed by the Honourable Rona Ambrose

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY  
INSCRIRE LE NOM DU SIGNATAIRE

SIGNATURE  
MINISTER OR PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY  
MINISTRE OU SECRÉTAIRE PARLEMENTAIRE

SUBJECT / OBJET

Health Care Services

RESPONSE / RÉPONSE

ORIGINAL TEXT  
TEXTE ORIGINAL

TRANSLATION  
TRADUCTION

As the federal regulator for food, Health Canada has a number of ongoing activities and measures in place to minimize allergy incidents associated with food, to better support Canadians by providing them with the necessary tools so they can make informed decisions. These include: regulatory measures for food safety labelling; generating educational material and advisories for the public, and investments in research in the areas of anaphylaxis and food allergies.

In August 2012, new regulations came into force that strengthen Canada's food labelling requirements for priority allergens, gluten sources and added sulphites so Canadians with food allergies, sensitivities and celiac disease would be better able to make more informed choices about the foods they buy or with which they come in contact. These regulations require that specified allergens, gluten sources or added sulphites present in pre-packaged foods must be clearly indicated on the label. This provides for clearer plain-language labelling, which makes it much easier for Canadians living with food allergies to identify foods they can safely eat or choose for their families.

Health Canada, in collaboration with the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Public Safety Canada, Transport Canada, and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, communicates health and safety information through the Healthy Canadians website. Through this website, Canadians have a coordinated, one-stop information tool for product recall and safety alerts, including those for food products.

Health Canada's food allergies and intolerances webpage contains educational information on food allergies for consumers. The Department also provides a Food Allergies e-Notice which is a free service for subscribers to stay on top of issued advice as well as regulatory and scientific developments in the area of food allergies and intolerances in Canada.

Health Canada also works in close collaboration with a number of consumer associations such as Anaphylaxis Canada, and the Association Québécoise des Allergies Alimentaires by participating in their annual conferences, providing representatives to their training sessions "ask an allergist" as well as giving presentations during forums and conferences dedicated to education and awareness. Health Canada also advises Canadian consumers to consult these associations' websites for educational and training information on reducing risks of anaphylaxis and allergies.

Through the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Government of Canada is funding research on immunity, including anaphylaxis. Since 2006, CIHR has invested over \$1.5 billion in immunity research.

The Government of Canada is also supporting research in this area through the Allergy, Genes and Environment Network (AllerGen) Network of Centres of Excellence (NCE). As an NCE, AllerGen is jointly administered by Canada's three granting agencies: CIHR, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). This is done in partnership with Industry Canada and Health Canada. AllerGen supports research and fosters commercialization, social innovation and knowledge mobilization that will enable Canadians to better prevent, treat and manage allergic diseases and asthma. AllerGen is also training the next generation of researchers, innovators and clinician-scientists, while collaboratively working to reduce the morbidity, mortality and socio-economic impacts of allergy, asthma, anaphylaxis and related immune diseases. From 2004-2019, the Government of Canada is investing \$74.4 million in this NCE.

Health Canada is also supporting a variety of research projects in the field of food allergies to help fill the knowledge gaps and support policy development, including: the use of precautionary "may contain" statements for specified food allergens on the labels of pre-packaged food products; prevalence of food allergies in vulnerable populations and the role of contributing factors, such as environmental influences, as they relate to the potential cause of food allergies; and, improving our understanding of anaphylaxis, the identification of anaphylactic triggers, facilitation of patient follow-up, and informing the development of improved diagnostic approaches and therapeutic strategies.

The Government's investments in research have contributed greatly to the knowledge and regulatory development in the area of food allergens. As additional data are collected and analyzed, it is expected that these research studies will continue to inform how Health Canada approaches the issue of food allergens and the means of managing the associated risks.

Health Canada has made significant progress by putting in place regulatory requirements for food products so that allergens must be clearly labelled. The Department works with its federal partners and has put together coordinated educational material and information to communicate and increase awareness of anaphylaxis. It has and continues to make significant investments in research studies on anaphylaxis and food allergies.



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RESPONSE BY THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT  
RÉPONSE DE LA MINISTRE DES TRANSPORTS

Signed by the Honourable Lisa Raitt

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY  
INSCRIRE LE NOM DU SIGNATAIRE

SIGNATURE  
MINISTER OR PARLAMENTARY SECRETARY  
MINISTRE OU SECRÉTAIRE PARLEMENTAIRE

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The Canadian Transportation Agency (Agency) is an independent, quasi-judicial tribunal of the Government of Canada responsible for resolving disputes and improving access to transportation services in the federal transportation network. Under the *Canada Transportation Act*, the Agency is responsible for removing undue obstacles to the mobility of persons with disabilities.

In June 2011, the Canadian Transportation Agency ordered Air Canada to create a buffer zone around anaphylactic passengers when at least 48-hour advance notice is provided to the company by persons with disabilities due to their allergy to peanuts or nuts. WestJet and Air Canada Jazz also implemented the buffer zone approach in 2011, following the Agency's decision.

The Agency has determined that the following actions, taken together, result in appropriate accommodation onboard aircraft for persons with peanut and nut allergies: separate seating for persons with peanut and nut allergies in a buffer zone, the banning in this buffer zone of peanuts and nuts and products known to contain nuts, the modern air filtration and circulation systems which maintain low levels of air contaminants in aircraft cabins, and a passenger's own mitigating measures to control an allergic reaction such as carrying an Epi-pen.