U. S. Department of Justice

Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

MAY 22 2006

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Conyers:

This is in response to your letter of February 7, 2003. You express concern that the religious diet offered in the Federal Bureau of Prisons (Bureau) is not equitable when compared to the regular diet provided to other inmates.

For more than twenty years, the Bureau has endeavored to provide nutritionally sound meals to meet the religious dietary needs of federal inmates. Ten years ago, following a successful religious diet program piloted in several institutions, the Bureau implemented the program nationwide, making the menu available to all inmates requiring a religious diet accommodation. The menu provided nationally recognized religiously certified foods (three hot entrees per week), and fresh fruits and vegetables, or a pork-free meal option for those who were less stringent with respect to dietary laws.

The Bureau continually reviews and adjusts its religious menu commensurate with the increased commercial availability of nationally recognized religiously certified foods. With the assistance of religious and community leaders, the Bureau has incrementally improved the menu to make it as equitable as is feasible, given cost and availability factors, as well as the very individual nature of religious diet adherence. During the last five years the Bureau adapted the religious menu to include hot hard boiled eggs, reconstituted hot cereal, and soups, in order to ensure some hot food items on the days when hot entrees were not on the menu.

It seems important to note that the religious diet menu enclosed with your correspondence does not reflect the current operating procedures. In February 2001, the menu was changed to include five hot entrees each week. Under the present menu, the entrees consist of such items as a four-ounce meat/fish portion, cheese omelette with potatoes, and cheese lasagna. The daily protein servings on the religious diet menu meet or surpass the recommended daily allowance (RDA) for protein, even though the portion is not always comparable in serving weight to that of the protein serving provided for the regular menu.

More recently, the Bureau has proposed a national policy which will increase the availability of hot entrees to one every day, and approximately 3,100 calories per day, which is comparable to the regular menu. The dietary laws require the use of distinctly separate kitchen space, ovens, vats, refrigerators, and utensils. These requirements drive the cost of food preparation and cooking beyond what is a manageable per capita cost in the overall food services budget allotment. Therefore, the Bureau has determined that the pre-packaged entrees, enhanced with both hot and cold nutritional side dishes, is the best and most reasonable accommodation it can make, given the wide range of religious dietary practices embraced by inmates.

The Bureau continues to strive to find the exact balance in providing for the inmates' religious and nutritional needs through a religiously certified food menu. The stringent laws governing religious observance make it impossible for the Bureau to maintain complex religious dietary standards, except through the use of pre-packaged meals. Again, it is with the input of leading religious leaders that the Bureau has determined its course of action.

We trust this has addressed your concerns. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Sincerely,

William E. Moschella

William E. Moschella
Assistant Attorney General

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary

RELIGIOUS DIET MENU
CYCLE 2

SUNDAY BREAKFAST	MONDAY BREAKFAST	TUESDAY BREAKFAST	WEDNESDAY BREAKFAST	THURSDAY BREAKFAST	FRIDAY BREAKFAST	SATURDAY BREAKFAST
1 APPLE	½ CUP APPLE JUICE	1 BANANA	1 ORANGE	½ CUP APPLE JUICE	½ CUP ORANGE JUICE	1 APPLE
2 IND DRY CEREAL	2 IND DRY CEREAL	2 IND DRY CEREAL	2 IND DRY CEREAL	2 IND DRY CEREAL	2 IND DRY CEREAL	2 IND DRY CEREAL
1 MUFFIN OR DANISH	2 SL BREAD	2 SL BREAD	2 SL BREAD	2 SL BREAD	2 SL BREAD	1 PKG GRITS
2 SL BREAD	2 CUPS 2% MILK	2 CUPS 2% MILK	2 CUPS 2% MILK	2 CUPS 2% MILK	2 CUPS 2% MILK	1 MUFFIN OR DANISH
2 CUPS 2% MILK	1 PKG OATMEAL	1 PKG INSTANT FARINA	1 PKG INSTANT GRITS	1 PKG INSTANT OATMEAL	1 PKG INSTANT FARINA	2 SL BREAD
1 PKG INSTANT GRITS	1 CUP COFFEE	1 CUP COFFEE	1 CUP COFFEE	1 CUP COFFEE	1 CUP COFFEE	2 CUPS 2% MILK
1 CUP COFFEE	6 PKG SUGAR	6 PKG SUGAR	6 PKG SUGAR	6 PKG SUGAR	6 PKG SUGAR	1 CUP COFFEE
6 PKG SUGAR	2 PKG JELLY	2 PKG JELLY	2 PKG JELLY	2 PKG JELLY	2 PKG JELLY	6 PKG SUGAR
2 PKG JELLY	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PKG JELLY
2 PATS MARGARINE						2 PATS MARGARINE
SUNDAY LUNCH	**MONDAY LUNCH**	**TUESDAY LUNCH**	**WEDNESDAY LUNCH**	**THURSDAY LUNCH**	**FRIDAY LUNCH**	**SATURDAY LUNCH**
1 FRESH ORANGE	1 APPLE	½ GRAPEFRUIT	1 BANANA	1 APPLE	1 FRESH PEACH	½ GRAPEFRUIT
OMELET W/POTATOES	1/4 CUP CHOPPED ONIONS	3 OZ TUNA FISH	3 OZ SARDINES	6 TBSP PEANUT BUTTER	½ CUP COTTAGE CHEESE	3 OZ TUNA FISH
½ BELL PEPPER, SLICED	3 OZ SARDINES	2 HOT HARD BOILED EGGS	1 ½ CUP VEG BEANS	2 HOT HARD BOILED EGGS	1 CUP SL CUCUMBERS	1 CUP LETTUCE
½ CUP SLICED TOMATOES	1 CUP ZUCCHINI	1/4 CUP FRESH ONIONS	1 CUP FRESH BROCCOLI	6 CELERY STICKS	6 CELERY STICKS	1 CUP FRESH SPINACH
1 CUP LETTUCE	1 CUP SLICED TOMATOES	1 CUP SLICED TOMATOES	1 CUP LETTUCE	1 CUP SLICED TOMATOES	1 CUP LETTUCE	½ CUP SLICED ONIONS
4 SL WHEAT BREAD	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	2 PKG PICKLE RELISH	4 SL WHITE BREAD	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	4 SL WHITE BREAD	4 SL WHEAT BREAD
10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	4 SL WHITE BREAD	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH
2 PATS MARGARINE	1 PKG MAYONNAISE	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	2 PKG MAYONNAISE	3 PKG JELLY	3 PKG JELLY	2 PKG PICKLE RELISH
	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PKG MAYONNAISE	2 PATS MARGARINE	1 PKG MAYONNAISE	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PKG MAYONNAISE
		2 PKG MARGARINE				
SUNDAY SUPPER	**MONDAY SUPPER**	**TUESDAY SUPPER**	**WEDNESDAY SUPPER**	**THURSDAY SUPPER**	**FRIDAY SUPPER**	**SATURDAY SUPPER**
1 BANANA	1 FRESH PEAR	½ CANTALOUPE	1 FRESH PEACH	1 ORANGE	1 BANANA	1/4 CANTALOUPE
6 TBSP PEANUT BUTTER	4 OZ CHICKEN ENTREE	1 ½ CUP VEG BEANS	4 OZ BEEF ENTREE	CHEESE LASAGNA	4 OZ FISH ENTREE	4 TBSP PEANUT BUTTER
1 CUP CAULIFLOWER	1 CUP CHOPPED CABBAGE	½ CUP COTTAGE CHEESE	1 CUP CHOPPED CABBAGE	1 ½ CUP VEG BEANS	1 CUP SLICED ONIONS	1 ½ CUP VEG BEANS
6 CELERY STICKS	1 CUP FRESH SPINACH	½ BELL PEPPER, SLICED	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	1 CUP SLICED TOMATOES	1 CUP FRESH BROCCOLI	1 CUP SL CUCUMBERS
1 CUP LETTUCE	6 CELERY STICKS	1 CUP FRSH CAULIFLOWER	2 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	½ CUP SLICED TOMATOES	6 CELERY STICKS
4 SL WHEAT BREAD	6 CARROTS STICKS	1 CUP LETTUCE	2 PATS MARGARINE	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	4 SL WHEAT BREAD
10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	1 CUP LETTUCE	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	3 PKG MAYONNAISE	2 PATS MARGARINE	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH
2 PKG JELLY	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	2 PKG PICKLE RELISH	1 CUP CAULIFLOWER	2 PATS MARGARINE	3 PKG JELLY
1 BOUILLON CUBE	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	2 PATS MARGARINE	1 CUP LETTUCE	6 CARROT STICKS	1 PKG MAYONNAISE	1 BOUILLON CUBE
	2 PATS MARGARINE	1 BOUILLON CUBE		1 BOUILLON CUBE		
	2 PKG MAYONNAISE					

FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES MAY BE SUBSTITUTED SEASONALLY IF AUTHORIZED BY THE FSA WITH CONCURRENCES OF THE APPROPRIATE ASSOCIATE WARDEN. SHELF STABILIZED MEALS FROM THE COMMISSARY MAYBE USED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR HOT ENTREES. MATZO MAYBE USED IN PLACE OF BREAD, WHEN KOSHER BREAD IS NOT READILY AVAILABLE. CARROTS AND CELERY STICKS WILL BE A MINIMUM OF 3 AND NOT LONGER THAN 5". *HIGH RISES AND SATELLITE FEEDING ARE AUTHORIZED TO SERVE COLD HARD BOILED EGGS.

RELIGIOUS DIET MENU
CYCLE 1

SUNDAY BREAKFAST	MONDAY BREAKFAST	TUESDAY BREAKFAST	WEDNESDAY BREAKFAST	THURSDAY BREAKFAST	FRIDAY BREAKFAST	SATURDAY BREAKFAST
1 BANANA	½ CUP APPLE JUICE	1 BANANA	1 APPLE	1 BANANA	½ CUP APPLE JUICE	½ GRAPEFRUIT
2 IND DRY CEREAL	2 IND DRY CEREAL	2 IND DRY CEREALS	2 IND DRY CEREAL	2 IND DRY CEREALS	2 IND DRY CEREAL	2 IND DRY CEREAL
1 MUFFIN OR DANISH	2 SL BREAD	1 MUFFIN OR DANISH	2 SL BREAD	2 SL BREAD	1 PKG GRITS	2 SL BREAD
4 SL BREAD	2 CUPS 2% MILK	2 SL WHEAT BREAD	2 CUPS 2% MILK	2 CUPS 2% MILK	2 SL BREAD	2 CUPS 2% MILK
2 CUPS 2% MILK	1 PKG INSTANT FARINA	2 CUPS 2% MILK	1 PKG GRITS	1 PKG OATMEAL	2 CUPS 2% MILK	1 PKG FARINA
1 PKG INSTANT OATMEAL	1 CUP COFFEE	1 CUP COFFEE	1 CUP COFFEE	1 CUP COFFEE	1 CUP COFFEE	1 CUP COFFEE
1 CUP COFFEE	6 PKG SUGAR	6 PKG SUGAR	6 PKG SUGAR	6 PKG SUGAR	6 PKG SUGAR	6 PKG SUGAR
6 PKG SUGAR	2 PKG JELLY	2 PKG JELLY	2 PKG JELLY	2 PKG JELLY	2 PKG JELLY	2 PKG JELLY
2 PKG JELLY	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE
2 PATS MARGARINE						

SUNDAY LUNCH	MONDAY LUNCH	TUESDAY LUNCH	WEDNESDAY LUNCH	THURSDAY LUNCH	FRIDAY LUNCH	SATURDAY LUNCH
½ GRAPEFRUIT	1 FRESH PEAR	1 ORANGE	1 ORANGE	1 APPLE	1 ORANGE	1 FRESH APPLE
CHEESE OMELET	6 TBSP PEANUT BUTTER	3 OZ TUNA FISH	3 OZ SARDINES	2 HOT HARD BOILED EGGS	½ CUP COTTAGE CHEESE	3 OZ SARDINES
W/POTATOES	1 CUP FRESH BROCCOLI	2 HOT HARD BOILED EGGS	1/4 CUP FRESH ONIONS	6 TBSP PEANUT BUTTER	1 ½ CUP VEG BEANS	1 CUP FRESH BROCCOLI
½ CUP FRESH ZUCCHINI	6 CELERY STICKS	1 ½ CUP VEG BEANS	1 CUP SLICED TOMATOES	1 CUP FRESH SPINACH	1/4 CUP FRESH ONIONS	6 CELERY STICKS
¼ CUP FRESH ONIONS	1 CUP LETTUCE	1 CUP LETTUCE	6 CELERY STICKS	6 CELERY STICKS	6 CELERY STICKS	1 CUP LETTUCE
½ CUP SLICED TOMATOES	4 SL WHITE BREAD	6 CARROT STICKS	1 CUP LETTUCE	6 CARROT STICKS	6 CARROT STICKS	4 SL WHEAT BREAD
4 SL WHEAT BREAD	10 OZ. FRUIT PUNCH	4 SL WHITE BREAD	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH
10 OZ. FRUIT PUNCH	3 PKG JELLY	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	2 PKG MUSTARD
2 PKG JELLY	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PKG MAYONNAISE	1 PKG MUSTARD	3 PKG JELLY	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE
2 PATS MARGARINE		2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE			
		2 PKG PICKLE RELISH				

SUNDAY SUPPER	MONDAY SUPPER	TUESDAY SUPPER	WEDNESDAY SUPPER	THURSDAY SUPPER	FRIDAY SUPPER	SATURDAY SUPPER
1 ORANGE	1 APPLE	1 FRESH PEAR	1 BANANA	1 FRESH PEACH	1 APPLE	1 ORANGE
½ CUP COTTAGE CHEESE	4 OZ CHICKEN ENTREE	½ CUP COTTAGE CHEESE	4 OZ BEEF ENTREE	CHICKEN CHOW MEIN	4 OZ FISH ENTREE	1 ½ CUP VEG BEANS
1½ CUP VEG BAKED BEANS	1 CUP VEG BEANS	1 ½ CUP VEG BEANS	3 OZ FRESH CABBAGE	1 CUP FRESH BROCCOLI	½ CUP SL CUCUMBERS	3 OZ FRESH CABBAGE
½ BELL PEPPER, SLICED	¼ CUP FRESH ONIONS	½ BELL PEPPER, SLICED	1 ½ CUP VEG BEANS	1 CUP LETTUCE	½ CUP SLICED TOMATOES	1/4 CUP FRESH ONIONS
1 CUP CAULIFLOWER	1 CUP SLICED TOMATOES	1 CUP SLICED TOMATOES	6 CARROT STICKS	4 SL WHITE BREAD	1 CUP LETTUCE	1 CUP SLICED TOMATOES
1 CUP LETTUCE	4 SL WHITE BREAD	1 CUP LETTUCE	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	6 CARROT STICKS
4 SL WHEAT BREAD	10 OZ. FRUIT PUNCH	4 SL WHEAT BREAD	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	2 PKG MAYONNAISE	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	4 SL WHITE BREAD
10 OZ. FRUIT PUNCH	2 PATS MARGARINE	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE	1 PKG MAYONNAISE	10 OZ FRUIT PUNCH
2 PATS MARGARINE	1 PKG MAYONNAISE	2 PATS MARGARINE		2 PKG PICKLE RELISH	2 PATS MARGARINE	2 PATS MARGARINE
1 BOUILLON CUBE		1 BOUILLON CUBE		1 BOUILLON CUBE		1 BOUILLON CUBE

FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES MAY BE SUBSTITUTED SEASONALLY IF AUTHORIZED BY THE FSA WITH CONCURRENCES OF THE APPROPRIATE ASSOCIATE WARDEN. SHELF STABILIZED MEALS FROM THE COMMISSARY MAYBE USED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR HOT ENTREES. MATZO MAYBE USED IN PLACE OF BREAD, WHEN KOSHER BREAD IS NOT READILY AVAILABLE. CARROTS AND CELERY STICKS WILL BE A MINIMUM OF 3 AND NOT LONGER THAN 5". *HIGH RISES AND SATELLITE FEEDING ARE AUTHORIZED TO SERVE COLD HARD BOILED EGGS.