

1 A RESOLUTION urging federal policymakers to adopt a uniform definition of
2 "ultra-processed food."

3 WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky recognizes
4 that the health of Kentuckians directly affects workforce participation, educational
5 outcomes, military readiness, and the long-term fiscal stability of state and federal
6 programs; and

7 WHEREAS, Kentucky consistently experiences higher-than-national-average rates
8 of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other diet-related chronic conditions,
9 which contribute to increased Medicaid expenditures, reduced productivity, and strain on
10 rural and urban health care systems alike; and

11 WHEREAS, the American food system has evolved over recent decades to include
12 a growing share of foods manufactured using complex industrial processes, additives, and
13 formulations not traditionally used in home or commercial kitchens; and

14 WHEREAS, foods commonly described in scientific literature as "ultra-processed"
15 now constitute a substantial portion of caloric intake in the United States, including
16 among children and working-age adults in the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and

17 WHEREAS, numerous peer-reviewed studies have identified correlations between
18 high consumption of such foods and adverse health outcomes, while also acknowledging
19 the need for consistent terminology to ensure reliable research, sound policymaking, and
20 clear communication to the public; and

21 WHEREAS, the lack of a uniform, federally recognized definition of "ultra-
22 processed food" has resulted in inconsistent usage across federal agencies, academic
23 research, dietary guidelines, and regulatory discussions, creating uncertainty for
24 consumers, producers, and policymakers; and

25 WHEREAS, clear and narrowly tailored definitions adopted at the federal level can
26 improve transparency, reduce regulatory ambiguity, support free-market decision-
27 making, and allow states to craft health and nutrition policies consistent with local needs

1 and values; and

2 WHEREAS, federal policymakers are uniquely positioned to establish a
3 scientifically grounded, nonpartisan definition of "ultra-processed food" that respects
4 consumer choice, avoids unnecessary regulatory overreach, and provides a common
5 framework for research, education, and voluntary guidance; and

6 WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Kentucky has a legitimate interest in
7 encouraging federal policies that are clear, evidence-based, and supportive of healthier
8 outcomes without imposing mandates on states, families, or businesses;

9 NOW, THEREFORE,

10 ***Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the***
11 ***Commonwealth of Kentucky:***

12 ➔Section 1. The House of Representatives of the General Assembly respectfully
13 urges federal policymakers to adopt the following uniform definitions:

14 (1) "Ultra-processed food of concern" means a food that is high in added sugars,
15 industrial fats, and additives that offers no meaningful benefit to safety, shelf life, or
16 nutrient availability, and provides minimal nutritional value; and

17 (2) "Ultra-processed food" means a food product for human consumption
18 excluding:

19 (a) A food that is nutrient dense and is regulated under the Federal Meat
20 Inspection Act, 21 U.S.C. sec. 601 et seq., the Poultry Products Inspection Act, 21 U.S.C.
21 sec. 451 et seq., or the Egg Products Inspection Act, 21 U.S.C. sec. 1031 et seq.;

22 (b) A nutrient-dense food that is composed of three or more nutrients per serving
23 and contains fewer calories than a nonnutrient-dense food and that may be processed to
24 improve safety, shelf life, or nutrient availability; or

25 (c) A food that:

26 1. Is processed to preserve or slightly enhance a whole food;

27 2. Is derived from a whole, natural, or raw agricultural product and maintains a

1 similar nutrient profile;

2 3. Is canned, cured, frozen, or contains minimal additives and complies with
3 good manufacturing practices and applicable federal and state food safety regulations;

4 4. Uses traditional preservation methods, including but not limited to:

5 a. Salting;

6 b. Curing, or

7 c. Smoking;

8 5. Uses ingredients to prepare or season a whole food, including but not limited
9 to:

10 a. Oils;

11 b. Fats;

12 c. Sugar;

13 d. Honey; and

14 e. Salt; or

15 6. Preserves or slightly enhances an existing whole food.

16 (3) This section shall not apply to a liquid beverage for human consumption.

17 ➔Section 2. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit a
18 copy of this Resolution to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the
19 Majority Leader of the United States Senate, each member of the Kentucky congressional
20 delegation, the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, and the
21 Commissioner of the Food Drug Administration.