

Stay Out of My Kitchen!

☒ Let me start out by saying I'm not one of those size 2 gals who won't eat a Hershey's kiss because they're afraid they'll gain an ounce. I'm a normal size 12 woman who has fought against weight gain all my adult life. I try and watch what I eat, not always successfully, but get to the gym regularly, and, for the most part, I have no aches or pains.

I know what I'm supposed to do and what I'm not supposed to do. Unless someone's lived under a rock for the last 50 years, everyone knows that foods high in fat and tobacco products are not good for you. If you sit and watch tv all night with a bag of Fritos and a few cans of beer, you're going to gain weight. If you never do any exercise, you're going to lose all muscle strength and have a whole lot of problems.

But, even with everything we already know, we're still an obese country and, quite simply, people are going to do what they're going to do. No amount of government spending will make people healthier. You can't legislate good eating habits.

Michelle Obama has tried to influence the citizenry in good eating habits and exercise. I doubt that statistics will show she's had any overall influence on how people live their lives or raise their children.

On top of all of her efforts, I now read that billions of dollars of taxpayer money are being spent on more ridiculous programs aimed at changing the way people think about eating.

Part of Obamacare includes allocation of \$500 million for something called the Prevention and Public Health Fund which has been increased by an additional \$750 million in 2011. All this money is aimed at preventing tobacco use, obesity, heart disease, stroke and cancer, etc., etc. In all, \$15 billion,

yes “b” as in billion, will be allocated to this fund over the next decade.

These monies are doled out in what are called “Community Transformation Grants” or “CTGs” to fund “prevention, wellness, and public health activities.”

Here’s some examples of this wasteful expenditure of the taxpayers’ money.

\$4.9 million was given to Florida to assign nutrition and physical activity consultants to child care centers and restaurants to promote healthy behaviors and limit unhealthy food choices.

\$3.7 million in North Carolina to improve access and availability of healthy foods and drinks, improve product placement and attractiveness, and change the relative process of healthy vs. unhealthy items in convenience stores.

\$3.6 million to California for the “Rethink your Drink Campaign” designed to get people to drink healthier alternatives such as water, milk, or 100 percent fruit juice beverages. (I always thought fruit juices were very high in sugar and bad for your teeth.)

Nearly \$1.2 million to Colorado for programs to increase sodium awareness and reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.

Sodium awareness? Really? We’ve known about “too much salt” in our diets as far back as the late 50s. My mother’s doctor had her on a low-sodium diet because she used to eat those little tasteless Melba toast crackers. So, after over 50 years, how much more do we need to know about “too much salt?”

Anyone who really wants to know about nutrition need only go to a library or go online and google Dr. Oz. Reading one of his books is all anyone needs to do – and it doesn’t cost

anything if you get his books at the library or go on his website.

If you don't like to read, why not watch The Biggest Loser on network tv –you don't even have to pay for cable. Doesn't that gal Michaels help everyone lose hundreds of pounds each season with sensible eating habits and exercise? And her advice is free!

When I read about government wasteful spending, and I read about it every day, I have to conclude that it's all about keeping another governmental bureaucracy, with more layers than a delicious Napoleon pastry, alive and well – at our expense.

In April, the House passed H.R. 1217 which eliminated the Prevention and Public Health Fund. In October, the Senate reviewed the merits and necessity of the Fund and has not yet voted on the issue. God only knows why it takes months to accomplish anything in Congress.

As far as I'm concerned, all this wasteful spending is more over-reaching by the government to try and modify our behavior. After this \$15 billion is spent trying to influence consumer behavior, nothing will change. It's an individual's decision and no amount of government spending is going to have any effect on that decision.

If someone doesn't already know that eating at McDonald's every day is a bad thing, they're hopeless and no amount of taxpayer money aimed at educating this clueless individual will make a difference.

Wishing you a joyous, happy and healthy New Year!