More on the Web!

Photo: CSPI.

saw a poster before ordering.

four fast-food chains asked for a brochure or online before going to lunch? And one U.S.
the restaurant. But who has the time to go

on the Internet or in brochures or posters at

quietly spurred companies to trim “bad” nu-

trients (like sodium and trans fat) and boost

others will help press governments across the

kind of activism in Canada. Bonus: If cities or provinces require menu

labelling, the federal gov-

ernment may not have the

authority to undo or block

those initiatives.

In fact, Canadian gov-

ernments could one-up

the U.S. Congress by

including sodium labelling (or warning labels for high-

sodium foods) along with
calories.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada,

Canadian Public Health Association, Ontario

Medical Association, and Dietitians of Canada have each called for some form of menu nutri-
tion labelling, and the U.S. Institute of Medi-
cine—highly respected by Health Canada policy-makers—twice recommended menu

labelling. So did Health Canada’s own Sodium

Working Group.

Since the restaurant industry refuses to

provide menu labelling on its own, I hope

that thousands of Nutrition Action readers and

others will help press governments across the
country to require calorie and sodium num-

bers on menus and menu boards. If you’d like to

help, visit www.cspinet.ca.

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The Writing on the Wall

Boston Pizza’s Boston

Cheesesteak sand-

wich has nearly three
times more calories than

the chain’s NY Striploin Steak

sandwich (1,140 vs. 420).

At Tim Hortons, a Frosted

Cinnamon Roll has almost
twice as many calories as a

Chocolate Glazed Donut (470 vs. 260).

In the United States, patrons would have

a decent shot at seeing

those numbers right

on the menu or menu

board. Restaurants in

New York City, Seattle,

California, and elsewhere

now give tens of mil-

lions of U.S. diners the

goods on sometimes-

shocking numbers: a

580-calorie venti White

Chocolate Mocha at

Starbucks, for example, or

a 1,360-calorie Baconator

Triple at Wendy’s.

But this is Canada, and

people who eat at Tim Hortons, Késey’s,

Starbucks, cafeterias, movie theatres, and

elsewhere are left in the dark. Why?

Because restaurant menus are exempt

from the eight-year-old regulations man-
dating Nutrition Facts for calories and 13
other nutrients on foods sold in grocery and

convenience stores (and foods sold to

restaurants).

That’s unfair to consumers. Nutrition Facts

labels on food packages have helped shoppers

put healthier foods into their carts and have

quietly spurred companies to trim “bad” nut-

rients (like sodium and trans fat) and boost

“good” ones (like fibre). Restaurant-goers

deserve no less.

In the United States, the industry’s National

Restaurant Association went from being an

opponent of dozens of local and state menu

labelling laws to being a proponent of a single
calories-only national law. It did that to pro-
tect its members from a hodgepodge of laws

that required different information on menus

in different places.

Those local laws were championed by

public-health-minded legislators and shored

up by health advocates. We need the same

kind of activism in Canada.

The contents of NAH are not intended
to provide medical advice, which should be
obtained from a qualified health professional.
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