

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 9, 2017

Mr. Daniel S. Schwartz
Chief Executive Officer
Restaurant Brands International Inc.
226 Wycroft Road,
Oakville, Ontario L6K 3X7,
Canada

Dear Mr. Schwartz:

We write to inquire about Burger King's use of potentially harmful fluorinated chemicals in food wrappers, bags, boxes, or other kinds of food packaging. Per and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs) represent a class of chemicals sometimes used in fast food packaging to prevent grease and sauces from seeping through packaging. These chemical compounds have been linked to a variety of harmful long-term health impacts. Since these chemicals have been found to migrate from packaging into food, the use of these compounds creates a potential pathway for PFASs to enter the body.¹ We are therefore writing to better understand whether your company is contributing to unnecessary human exposure to these chemicals.

A recent peer-reviewed study highlighted by the *Washington Post*² found that 40 percent of food wrappers, bags, and boxes from 27 fast food chains, **including yours**, tested positive for these potentially risky chemicals.³ Exposure to certain PFASs has been linked to high cholesterol, abnormal thyroid hormone levels, pre-eclampsia, and kidney and testicular cancer.⁴ Furthermore, PFASs are also classified as persistent chemicals that are resistant to breaking down in both the environment and in humans, sometimes taking years for these chemicals to leave the body.⁵ According to the study, some food packaging even contained traces of PFOA, a chemical that has been banned as a food contact additive by the Food and Drug Administration.⁶ As you may know, PFOA is the notorious chemical that was used to create DuPont's Teflon for 50 years before its production was ended after being linked to cancer and developmental defects.⁷

¹ Begley, T. H., Hsu, W., Noonan, G., & Diachenko, G. (2008). Migration of fluorochemical paper additives from food-contact paper into foods and food simulants. *Food additives and contaminants*, 25(3), 384-390.

² Judkis, M. (2017) Researchers find 'another reason' to avoid fast food: Chemical in the packaging. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/food/wp/2017/02/01/researchers-find-another-reason-to-avoid-fast-food-chemicals-in-the-packaging/>

³ Schaidler, L. A., Balan, S. A., Blum, A., Andrews, D. Q., Strynar, M. J., Dickinson, M. E., ... & Peaslee, G. F. (2017). Fluorinated Compounds in US Fast Food Packaging. *Environmental Science & Technology Letters*.

⁴ C8 Science Panel (2012) Probable Link Reports. Retrieved from http://www.c8sciencepanel.org/prob_link.html

⁵ National Institute of Environmental Health Science (2016) Perfluorinated Chemicals. *National Institutes of Health, Research Triangle Park, NC*. Retrieved from https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials/perflourinated_chemicals_508.pdf

⁶ Andrews, D. and Walker, B. (2017) Many Fast Food Wrappers Still Coated in PFCS, Kin to Carcinogenic Teflon Chemical. *Environmental Working Group*. Available at <http://www.ewg.org/research/many-fast-food-wrappers-still-coated-pfcs-kin-carcinogenic-teflon-chemical>

⁷ Ibid 2.

Accordingly, we write to ask about your company's use of PFASs. Please provide responses to the following questions:

1. Does your company use food packaging that contains PFASs? If yes, please list exactly which food packaging products consumers can expect to contain these chemicals.
2. Does your company have a policy on the use of PFASs in food packaging products? If yes, please explain.
3. Do you have third-party food packaging suppliers?
 - a. If yes, how do you know if your suppliers are accurately disclosing the presence and use of PFASs in their products?
 - b. Do you or your suppliers regularly test for the presence of PFASs? Please explain.
 - c. Do you or your suppliers regularly test for the presence of chemicals that are banned for use in food contact surfaces, such as PFOA? Please explain.
4. As you may know, safer alternatives, including PFAS-free packaging exist in the current market. Do you have plans to adopt such alternatives? If yes, what is your timeline?

We respectfully request a reply no later than April 9, 2017. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

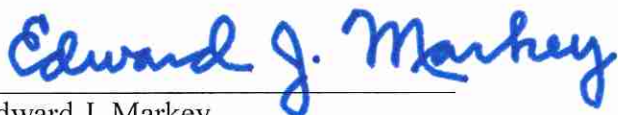
Sincerely,



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senate



Edward J. Markey
United States Senate