

The Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street,
London
SW1A 2AA

12 October 2026

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing on behalf of the advertising, broadcast media, publishing and wider creative industries, as well as food and drink manufacturers, regarding the Department of Health and Social Care's proposal to change the Nutrient Profiling Model (NPM) that underpins the restrictions on food and drink advertising on TV and online (the "LHF" restrictions).

Businesses from across the economy have welcomed your initial approach towards the private sector since you took up office, and your message that government will provide greater policy certainty – as well as listening carefully to business so that, together, we can drive good growth in every postcode.

We hope that you will be able to deliver on that promise in a concrete way by looking again at the NPM policy proposal, which threatens to undermine your Government's Industrial Strategy and Creative Industries Sector Plan – as well as broader investor and business confidence – and push up the prices households pay. We are asking you to urgently consider the impacts and press pause on its adoption.

The LHF restrictions were only introduced in January of this year. Industry has worked hard to implement and comply with these changes, having worked in partnership with government to help it adhere to its manifesto commitments. Ministers committed to review the impact of the LHF changes after five years; but now, only a few months in, industry is faced with plans to fundamentally alter the policy.

Our industries support the Government's health goals, but there is no evidence that the new Model would tackle obesity; and the Department's own Impact Assessment does not quantify the costs or benefits of applying it to advertising, an approach it describes as "high risk".

DHSC claims that its new Nutrient Profiling Model is a simple technical change to the regulations. In fact, this is a policy which would have wide-ranging financial, investment, and growth implications for our sectors, and deal a serious blow to advertisers' ability to market food and drink products which are lower in fat, sugar, or salt and which they have spent millions of pounds reformulating.

Independent analysis by Oxford Economics estimates that the change would affect a further £300m–400m of advertising spend on TV and across online publishers, platforms, and services, taking the cumulative impact of the restrictions to between £750 million and £1 billion. Food and drink manufacturers would also face one-off costs that other independent estimates put at around fifty times the figure assumed in the Impact Assessment. Costs on this scale risk being passed through to consumers

at a time when food prices are still rising. Investment and business confidence are at serious risk.

Advertising and marketing are named among the frontier industries for growth in the Government's own Industrial Strategy and Creative Industries Sector Plan, and the Chancellor has pledged to cut the burden of business regulation by 25% during this Parliament. This proposal from DHSC tells domestic and international investors exactly what they are warned to watch for: that UK regulation can change on a whim, at real cost to businesses that have already invested in reformulation and compliance.

The Government committed to a five-year statutory review before revisiting this framework. Abandoning that commitment mere months after implementation is poor regulatory practice by any measure. At a moment when growth is the Government's stated priority, and when every part of the economy needs the confidence to invest for the long term, this proposal adds fresh uncertainty and cost to an industry that itself underpins that growth. We do not believe this is a sensible or helpful course, for our industries or for the country.

Yours sincerely,

Asda

Carlsberg Britvic

Coca-Cola

KFC

Mars UK

Channel 4

Channel 5

ITV

Sky

STV

Filming Scotland

Spotlight

Havas Media Network

The Lane Group

Advertising Association

Association of Online Publishers (AOP)

British Soft Drinks Association (BSDA)

Casting Directors Association (CDA)

Cinema Advertising Association (CAA)

Incorporated Society of British Advertisers (ISBA)

Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA)

Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB UK)

News Media Association (NMA)

Outsmart

Potato Processors Association (PPA)

Professional Publishers Association (PPA)

CC

Varun Chandra, Prime Minister's Special Adviser on Business and Investment

The Rt Hon John Healey MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer

The Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport

The Rt Hon Jonathan Reynolds MP, Secretary of State for Business and Trade

The Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

The Rt Hon Dame Angela Eagle DBE MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs