

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 18, 2024

The Honorable Merrick Garland  
Attorney General  
United States Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland:

I write to urge the Department of Justice to investigate potential criminal conduct by foreign suppliers or parties within the supply chain sourcing severely contaminated cinnamon applesauce WanaBana, Schnucks, and Weis brand food pouches that were shipped into the United States. These food pouches are regularly consumed by toddlers and children, making their severe contamination especially dangerous.

Working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) investigation of the contamination of now-recalled cinnamon-flavored fruit puree pouches found lead and chromium toxicity well beyond naturally occurring levels — in some cases 2,000 times higher than a maximum level proposed by the FDA and 1,000 times higher than the lead level standards the international standard-setting body (Codex Alimentarius Commission) is considering adopting for other food products.

FDA officials have said their ongoing investigation has led the agency to suspect “economically-motivated” adulteration, otherwise known as fraud. This raises serious concerns that the cinnamon-flavored applesauce pouches that so far have been confirmed to have severely sickened nearly 90 Americans were deliberately contaminated<sup>1</sup> or sold despite knowledge of their toxicity.

Lead can be toxic to people of all ages but is especially harmful to infants and young children. High levels of lead exposure in children can cause significant and irreversible damage to the brain and nervous system and slow growth and development.

In the interest of food safety and our homeland security, I urge you to partner with FDA and CDC to swiftly investigate whether criminal charges are appropriate, identify those responsible for the poisoning of U.S. consumers, and take appropriate action.

I look forward to working with you on this important matter so consumers can remain confident in the safety of our food supply.

Sincerely,



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Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/12/14/applesauce-pouches-may-have-been-contaminated-on-purpose-fda-foods-chief-says-00131797>