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Media Contact:

Trudi Boyd for the Coalition for Sugar Reform

(202) 346-8841

Trudi.Boyd@fd.com

The Coalition for Sugar Reform Commends Congressmen Robert Dold, Earl Blumenauer, and Jim Moran for Supporting Reform of the U.S. Sugar Program

New Legislation Demonstrates Increasing Congressional Support for Ending Archaic Sugar Policy

(Washington, DC) May 19, 2011 – The Coalition for Sugar Reform today applauded Rep. Robert Dold (R-IL), Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), and Rep. Jim Moran (D-VA) for their leadership in supporting reform of the U.S. sugar program with their introduction of the Free Sugar Act (H.R. 1739). The legislation is a companion bill to S. 685, introduced earlier this year by Sen. Richard Lugar of Indiana, and is intended to promote jobs, fight consumer price inflation, and reduce both the budget deficit and the level of government interference in private markets.

“We commend Congressmen Dold, Blumenauer, and Moran for their bipartisan support to reform a decades-old policy that has sent U.S. sugar prices to an all-time high,” said Larry Graham, Chairman of the Coalition for Sugar Reform and President of the National Confectioners Association. “The current U.S. sugar program has kept sugar prices far above world price levels, causing American consumers, small businesses, and food manufacturers to pay the ultimate price by moving plants and factories offshore and eliminating thousands of jobs. This legislation is needed to put an end to unnecessary and wasteful federal government intervention.”

Because U.S. sugar prices are much higher than world prices, there is an incentive for small businesses and food manufacturers to import sugar-containing products or relocate plants and factories out of the country. An estimated 112,000 jobs were lost in U.S. sugar-using industries between 1997 and 2009, alone, and the U.S. Department of Commerce has stated that a chief culprit in job loss for such industries is U.S. sugar policy. In fact, the Commerce Department estimated that for every sugar growing job saved through high U.S. sugar prices, approximately three manufacturing jobs are lost.

The Free Sugar Act (H.R. 1739) was introduced in the House on May 5 by Congressmen Dold and co-sponsored by Reps. Blumenauer and Moran. The bill calls for comprehensive reform by discontinuing the loan program for sugar processors, eliminating tariffs on sugar imports, and putting an end to federal quota controls on domestic sugar production. These mandates together have conspired to send sugar prices in the United States to historical highs.

The bill introduced by Congressmen Dold is the latest reform legislation to be introduced this year. In addition to its companion bill, S. 685, introduced by Sen. Richard Lugar in March, Rep. Joe Pitts (R-PA) and Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL) demonstrated their leadership to reform U.S. sugar policy with their

introduction of the Free Market Sugar Act. Additionally, Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Sen. Mark Kirk (R-IL), and Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL) introduced The SUGAR Act in January, which would phase out the job-killing features of the current sugar program, including marketing allotments that restrict domestic sugar production, and import restraints that make it difficult for food and beverage manufacturers to make use of much-needed international supplies of sugar.

“We urge consumer advocates to join the Coalition for Sugar Reform, an alliance of consumer, food and beverage manufacturer, trade advocacy, environmental, taxpayer watchdog organizations, responsible government advocates, think tanks, and other interests,” continued Graham. “The Coalition was formed to educate members of Congress and the Administration about the real effects of current sugar policies on U.S. jobs, consumers, trade opportunities and the environment.”

Members of Congress are also urged to join support efforts to reform the U.S. sugar program by co-sponsoring sugar policy reform legislation and joining the Congressional Sugar Reform Caucus. The bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Caucus is chaired by Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, Sen. Mark Kirk, Rep. Joe Pitts and Rep. Danny Davis, and serves to promote an ongoing dialogue regarding legislative, regulatory, and trade issues affecting federal sugar programs and policy.

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The Coalition for Sugar Reform represents consumer, trade, and commerce groups, manufacturing associations, and food and beverage companies that use sugar (including confectioners, bakers, cereal manufacturers, beverage makers and dairy companies), as well as the trade associations for these industries.