**Announcement Letter**

Dear [\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_],

[NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION] is pleased to announce that we have joined the Better Choices Coalition of Howard County. The Coalition is an initiative of Howard County Unsweetened, a community effort that is working to make healthy choices easy.

**Why we joined**

A third of all children and half of all African American and Latino children born today will develop diabetes or “sugar” in their lifetimes. A quarter of all Howard County children and over half of adults are overweight or obese. Our lifestyle is making us sick. If we don’t do something today, this may be the first generation of children to live shorter lives than their parents.

One of the easiest things we can do is to “switch our drink.” Sugary drinks such as sodas, juices and sports drinks have been linked to diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, and other health conditions. Sugary drinks are now the largest source of added sugar and calories in a child’s diet.

We can do better. We want to make raising healthy kids as easy as possible. We live here because life is better here. And, even in the face of the ever more aggressive marketing of sugary products, we want it to stay that way.

**What this means**

As members of the Better Choices Coalition, we have pledged to take the following steps to help our organization’s children lead healthier, happier lives:

1. We will supply better drink choices at meetings and events
2. We will provide better drinks in vending machines, cafeterias, meeting rooms, etc
3. We will educate our members/employees/visitors about the benefits of choosing better drinks

We hope you will support us in this very important initiative. As always, we welcome any feedback from our members about this decision.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]