

**A Cure for the Common Class Action?
Letter to the Editor of Advertising Age
March 14, 2008**

Your March 10th editorial (*Airborne Suit Could Make Consumers Sick of Industry – 03.10.08*) underscores the fact that misleading or deceptive advertising erodes consumer confidence in advertising generally, not just in the ads of the offending advertiser.

A strong, vigorous self regulatory system is the best cure for deceptive advertising claims. Thirty years of experience shows that advertising industry self-regulation works best when competitors, who bring unique insight to advertising in their industries, challenge claims that they believe to be misleading or deceptive.

Leaders within the dietary-supplement industry, for example, determined that they had a problem with deceptive advertising within the industry. They approached the self-regulatory system to build an enhanced program. They have encouraged their members to challenge advertising that doesn't appear to meet standards of truthfulness and accuracy. As a result, the National Advertising Division of the Council of Better Business Bureaus (NAD) examined nearly 30 cases of advertising within the supplements industry in 2007.

More than 95 percent of the advertisers participating in an NAD review commit to abide by NAD's recommendations, including companies that advertise dietary supplements.

Industry oversight, coupled with rigorous self-regulatory review, can go a long toward reducing the number of headlines that begin "Class-Action Settlement ..." or "FTC Sues ..." or "FTC Charges"

For more information about the advertising industry's self-regulatory programs, please visit on the Web at www.narcpartners.org.

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