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Good morning Senator Harris, Representative Ritter, and distinguished Members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Patricia Grace-Farfaglia. I am testifying in support of Senate Bill No. 1080.

I believe restaurants should be required to inform the public of the total calorie information and list the major food allergens used in the preparation of menu items. As a Registered Dietitian I know how important it is for the public to have this information.

I have Multiple Sclerosis and non-celiac gluten sensitivity. Although I am currently in remission, if I ingest gluten, it can trigger a relapse of my multiple sclerosis. When I eat out, I favor restaurants that have nutrition information and offer gluten-free menu items, such as Uno Chicago Grill and Carrabba's Italian Grill. For the most part, I prepare my food at home. Luckily, as a dietitian I can easily modify recipes and eat a wide variety of the foods that I like. But like many other allergy sufferers, I often have to watch others enjoy their meal at a restaurant because there are too many unknowns.

I know how frustrating it is for restaurant owners to serve safe foods for their customers. Three years ago at my favorite Thai restaurant, the owner turned to me to interpret labels so he could advise a patron with gluten sensitivity on what foods he should not eat from this menu. Since 2005 the FDA has required food manufacturers to identify on the food label of packaged foods the presence of ingredients that contain protein derived from milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, or soybeans. This information should be made available to the restaurant staff and the public to in the interest of health and safety.

For people with Diabetes, knowing the calories and fat in a food is essential to controlling their weight and blood sugar. Once again, Uno Chicago Grill stands out as a chain that is proactive in giving the public nutrition information. Uno provides a kiosk to look up each entre and readily identify allergens, nutrition content, and food exchanges.

I disagree with the old idiom, what you don't know can't hurt you. People who have an allergy or a chronic illness will be harmed by lack of information. Thank you.