



**Connecticut Farm Bureau Association**

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**Testimony in Opposition to:**

**Raised Bill no. 5717 AN ACT CONCERNING GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOODS**

Submitted by: Donald Tuller, President, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

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*The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Connecticut Farm Bureau, a statewide nonprofit membership organization of over 5,000 families dedicated to farming and the future of Connecticut agriculture.*

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and Members of the Environment Committee:

On behalf of Connecticut Farm Bureau, I urge that this Committee defeat this proposed legislation because it will be detrimental to the Connecticut Economy, by unnecessarily raising costs for farmers, food sellers, consumers, and also increase the size and cost of State Government, without real public benefit.

Farm Bureau is a general farm organization that supports keeping the responsibility for labeling of food products on the Federal Level, and based on scientific findings relating to health. If the State of Connecticut were to establish a different standard, what would be the cost, where would the expertise come from? Many of our farmers ship to multiple states. You would be creating a logistical nightmare for them, to say nothing about food retailers. The expense would be passed along to consumers, and unnecessarily make Connecticut an even more economically disadvantaged than it already is now.

I do not think that labeling without context is responsible either. Without context, it is likely to be viewed as a warning label, and I'm not aware that you are making that case here. There is very little understanding by the public about food production as it is. For consumers that are concerned about Genetically Engineered Products in the food supply, there is a voluntary system already in place that is working. "Certified Organic" labeling is supposed to be free of Genetically Engineered Foods. I am not aware of a broad concern about this issue in the general population, in spite of the passion of the advocates for this bill. To spend the amount of other people's money, including creating another division of State Government, that the implementation of this bill would require, is not responsible government.

Farmers are a diverse group. The production strategies that they employ are diverse as well. Some farmers chose to use "organic" methods with the expectation of receiving a premium in the marketplace for their crops from consumers. Other farmers use other cropping methods that work better for them. We do not take sides, we support all farmers, and we believe strongly that Connecticut Elected Officials should not pass laws that would attempt to advantage one group of farmers over another either.

We urge the defeat of Raised Bill 5117: AN ACT CONCERNING GENTITCALLY ENGINEERED FOODS. Thank you.

Don Tuller President Connecticut Farm Bureau

**Connecticut Farm Bureau Association - *The Voice of Connecticut Agriculture***