

**Testimony of Beth Beisel
in support of
HB 6527, AAC Genetically Engineered Baby Food**

**Before the Children's Committee
Tuesday, March 5, 2013**

Good afternoon, Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, Ranking Members, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 6527, AAC Genetically Engineered Baby Food.

My name is Beth Beisel. I am a registered dietitian, and the mother of 3 children. I graduated from Villanova University and St. Joseph's College. I am not a hippy, or a bored housewife. Over the last year, I have significantly decreased my income-producing consulting business to help educate people about the health risks of GMOs for a grassroots campaign called GMO FREE CT. As a health care professional, I have seen the effects of what our changing food supply has done to my clients. Gastrointestinal disorders, allergies, auto immune disorders – diseases I never learned about in school have reached epidemic proportions. I have friends and relatives who worry, daily, about the mortality of their children with fatal food allergies; these children can't even sit with their friends at lunch, but instead must be segregated to a peanut free table, or a table for children with food allergies. This was unheard of 15 years ago.

Labels today list peanuts, sodium content, high fructose corn syrup, gluten and trans fat – but NOT genetically modified organisms, WHY? What is even more outrageous, is that even infant formula has GMOs and is unlabeled. **PARENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW WHAT IS IN THE FOOD THAT THEY FEED THEIR BABIES!**

If a woman can't or won't nurse her baby, the alternative is formula. Formula is a chemically developed substance made primarily from derivatives of corn and soy. This means that the first food many infants ingest comes from a plant that has its own pesticide number...yes, that's right. Every kernel of genetically engineered corn is made to express a deadly toxin, which causes a rootworm's stomach to explode. Each type of genetically engineered corn has a pesticide number and is registered with the

EPA. This is similar to the number on any chemical pesticide that you would find on the shelf at a hardware store. And it is in Baby Formula.

Infants do not have a fully developed immune system, nor is their blood brain barrier established. In Canada, BT toxin – used in GE corn, was found in the blood of pregnant women and in their unborn babies. The study was published last year in the Journal of Applied Toxicology.

Bacteria resistant to Round up, is also used in the genetic engineering of soy, corn, canola, and sugar beets. This hardwires them to withstand unprecedented saturation with chemicals like Roundup – which contains glyphosate and is geno- toxic. I am happy to provide peer reviewed medical literature which demonstrates that animals exposed to these foods develop smaller livers and brains, as well as infertility and cancerous tumors. The biotechnology industry claims that these foods are safe – but they have never been tested on humans. Your children – and mine – and you and I are the guinea pigs.

Because I DIDN'T KNOW, my babies ingested some of these chemicals and genetically modified foods, and I will have to live with that guilt and concern for the rest of my life.

We can't depend on the FDA to protect our children's health or tell us the truth. It is up to you, the CT General Assembly, to inform and protect the people who put you here. Over the last year, I have met many caring legislators with humility, who really do care about the people and their rights. I hope you will support this bill by affirming it, and encouraging House and Senate Leaders and the Governor's office to support it.

A coalition of 39 states and Canada is watching CT. We can continue to be leaders and heroes or we can give in to corporate threats and interests. I believe CT will do the right thing, and let parents make informed decisions for themselves.

Thank you for opportunity to address this issue and for doing what is right for your constituents.