

March 13, 2013

Dear Member of the Connecticut State House of Representatives:

I am writing today to ask you to approve HB 6519 and HB 6527 to label genetically engineered foods in Connecticut. These bills would give your constituents the right to know if GMOs (genetically modified organisms) are in their food - a right which citizens in 62 countries, including all of Europe, Japan, China, Australia, Brazil and New Zealand currently enjoy. These bills reaffirm our basic rights to make informed decisions when purchasing food for our families.

Over 80 percent of processed foods sold in grocery stores contain at least one genetically-engineered ingredient, typically soy, corn, canola, sugar or cottonseed oil. Polls conducted by professional news organizations including the Washington Post, MSNBC and Reuters/NPR consistently show that over 90 percent of consumers want genetically modified ingredients labeled. Consumers have a right to know if there are GMO ingredients in their food, just as they have a right to know if there is sugar, soy, wheat, nuts, saturated fats, dairy, salt or any other ingredient.

Currently, the FDA does not require safety testing to prove that GMO foods are safe for human or animal consumption or the environment. Rather, GMO ingredients have been allowed into the food supply through FDA's decision de facto deregulation - by granting them G.R.A.S. status (generally regarded as safe), even as they do not fit the criteria for G.R.A.S. status.

62 other countries have mandatory GMO labeling requirements have NOT seen an increase in costs for manufacturers or consumers. With growing evidence to suggest severe environmental and health implications from the agricultural production process of GMO products, including increased use of toxic chemicals, and their consumption, it is essential that consumers are given a choice.

Connecticut has a rich tradition of valuing local farms and farmers and supporting locally grown produce. GMO labeling will enhance, rather than undermine this tradition and enable consumers to make informed choices.

Please support your constituents' right to know what is in their food by approving HB 6519 and HB 6527 to label genetically engineered foods in Connecticut.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Kucinich
Director of Government Affairs