

Thursday, March 3rd, 2016

Testimony in SUPPORT of **HB 5300 AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS IN CHILDREN'S FOOD**. To require infant formula, baby food and children's foods that are produced partially or entirely with genetically engineered materials to be labelled as such.

Co-Vice Chairs, Vice Chairs, Ranking Members, and Members of the Committee on Children,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My mama bear instincts are in high gear which makes my blood boil raising my blood pressure on this particular issue of GE labeling. Why are Americans fighting so hard to a basic right - to know how our food is made? My first and foremost job is to protect the health and wellbeing of my young children. I've made it my mission to advocate for GE labeling for the past 3 years. I simply want a choice to opt out of purchasing foods containing GE ingredients. My young children's bodies are still developing and they are at the most vulnerable stages of their lives. I know many of my friends and family feel the same way. We Americans shouldn't have to fight so hard for four simple words on food packages. I'm skeptical and the question begs for truth - Are these Food companies trying to hide something? If they were proud of their products wouldn't they just simply label their packages. We are one of the only developed countries without labeling laws (Canada is the other). When it comes to GE, we are shopping blind. It is a request to exercise our right of freedom of choice. It's our constitutional right as an American citizen.

American food companies haven't conducted long-term studies on the effects of GE foods. Scientific research and studies all show possible correlations to chronic illnesses such as arthritis, gastrointestinal disorders, IBS, infertility, cancer, ADHD, autism, and reproductive disorders to name a few. I feel as though we are part of an experiment. We don't know what the long-term effects are on the human body. This is why I choose to opt out.

In recent years, food-labeling requirements have helped consumers know what they buy and what they are eating because there is a list of ingredients, nutritional information

and the amounts of sugar, fat, and calorie content. Simply listing “produced with Genetically Engineering” on food-labels is a valid addition to our existing labels.

When American Companies export food to other countries such as Russia, Europe & Asia, they follow strict labeling guidelines and requirements of foods containing Ge ingredients. 64 Countries already either ban or label foods containing GE ingredients. America should do the same. If food companies are proud of their products why not simply label them as such.

Maine and Connecticut are the two legislatures that so far passed GMO labeling bills, and about 30 states (including Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire) are introducing similar legislation. Vermont’s GMO Labeling law will go into effect in July. This clearly shows that our neighboring states legislators are listening to their constituents and are in favor of GE labeling.

We need a transparent food system. Please do the right thing and vote in favor of HB 5300.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

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Resources:

Gilles-Éric Séralini, French molecular biologist, political advisor and activist on genetically modified organisms and foods. - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gilles-Éric_Séralini

Robyn O'Brien, The Unhealthy Truth: One Mother's Shocking Investigation into the Dangers of America's Food Supply, May 11, 2010

Steven Druker, Altered Genes, Twisted Truth: How the Venture to Genetically Engineer Our Food Has Subverted Science, Corrupted, March 20, 2015

Michele Simon, *Appetite for Profit: How the Food Industry Undermines Our Health and How to Fight Back*, 2006