

Testimony in Opposition of House Bill 5300:

An Act Concerning the Use of Genetically Modified Organisms in Children's Food

Submitted by:

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Senator Dante, Representative Urban and distinguished members of the Committee on Children,

As a former researcher in public health and mother of three, it is my hope that you do not require any food labeling of genetically modified foods (GMOs). The scientific community is largely in agreement that there is no evidence that approved GMOs pose a risk to human health. Understandably, the public is fearful of science that is difficult to understand, and when poorly conducted research is used to support a position, it is often hard for the average person to critically evaluate the data.

Contrary to popular belief, the science is extensive. Depending on the use, each GMO food is independently approved by the FDA, USDA or EPA, each GMO, standing or falling on its own risk/benefit profile. Considerations include:

- The GM plant and its use as food
- The source of the gene
- The inserted DNA and flanking DNA at the insertion site
- The expressed substances (e.g., proteins and any new metabolites that result from the new gene product)
- The potential toxicity and antinutritional properties of new proteins or metabolites
- The introduced protein compared with those known to cause celiac disease if the DNA is from wheat, barley, rye, oats or related grains
- The introduced protein for potential allergenicity
- Key endogenous nutrients and antinutrients including toxins and allergens for potential increases for specific host plants (DNA recipients)

By requiring labeling, the Connecticut Legislature would not only be sending the message that FDA, USDA and EPA are not to be trusted, but also that science is not to be trusted. Additionally, once labeling is required by law, regulation and enforcement follows with attached costs, most likely to the taxpayer or consumer. Given the lack of scientific justification for this cost, the ramifications to all families must be considered.

Thank you for your thoughtful attention to this issue.