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I am an organic family farmer in Weston and mother of two children, ages 7 and 5. I first heard about GMOs when I lived in Colorado, where cattle and sheep ranchers saved pasture and grass-fed animals for their own consumption because they refused to eat animals they raised or finished on GMO corn, grains, antibiotics and growth hormones given to livestock they raised for public consumption.

I am proud that our state was the first to approve mandatory GMO labeling legislation. We must now show true leadership and remove the trigger clause that was put in place at that time. We have seen many states have follow suit pursuing their own labeling legislation since 2013.

We must support Vermont and fight the pre-emption of state's rights in their labeling efforts. Unsurprisingly, we have seen industry respond illegally and underhandedly in the Oregon ballot measure where they were just fined \$14 million. A clear message must be sent that states will not be bullied by industries such as biotech, petrochemical, and agrochemical and the GMA lobby.

Since 2013, when Connecticut passed mandatory labeling legislation, the biotech industry has grown stronger and even more aggressive—just like the superweeds and superpests their products create in agriculture.

But today, the people of Connecticut remain committed and willing to fight even harder for their right to know than ever before. Over 90 percent of Americans and 64 other countries stand in favor of labeling.

When I go to the grocery store, I must take the time to try to decipher ingredients on boxes to decide whether or not my purchase may or may not contain GE ingredients (clues like high fructose corn sugar, sugar beets, soy and soy derivatives, canola oil, cottonseed oil and various emulsifiers). It is exhausting and time consuming to a working parent.

Now the GMA wants to make me scan a QR code through my smart phone if I really want to know that I am buying food free from GMOs. My time is too precious for that. A clear and simple label must be presented.

If my personal pursuit of happiness is tied to the health of my family, knowing that I am purchasing nutritious, non-toxic foods, then my right to know is a Constitutional one.

As a democratic society, our first obligation and moral responsibility is to protect the populace--most especially the children--over and above any wishes of corporations and governments. In fact the responsibility extends to protecting the good of all children on this planet given the

privilege and freedom with which we are blessed. We must protect them from exposure to GMO foods that are probable carcinogens (as stated by the WHO), and allow parents to make easily informed choices of the foods they buy.

As a greater global concern, GMO agriculture wouldn't exist without fossil fuel inputs. Instead of using soils for carbon sequestration, GMO cultivation releases extraordinary amounts of carbon into the atmosphere. GMO cultivation leads to drought, erosion and soil depletion.

Cheap food and empty calories come at a long term price. As a nation we live with skyrocketing disease, obesity and the sickest generation of children we have seen. I call today's children, "Generation Rx."

This week, my conversation with Aides from the Senate Agricultural Committee bordered on the ridiculous. They insisted that they were trying to "help" consumers because we would be confused by inconsistencies in separate state's labels. I think we deserve more credit than that. Clear labels (not QR codes) with four words that say (made with genetic engineering) seem simple enough to me. Companies who provide consumers with organic foods and foods processed without GMOs should not have their rights taken away by industry and the GMA. (See DARK Act and the TPP language). Connecticut must stand up for our right to know today!

Unfairly, GMO growers have shifted the burden to organic farmers who must create ever-larger buffer zones and ensure rigorous testing of their product. It is appalling that tolerance levels of GMOs in organic food even exist. It proves at a basic level that the GMO experiment biotech has unleashed upon this earth has impacted nature and affected the rights of those families who choose to buy organically through cross contamination and transport of GMO seed and harvested product.

We are lucky to live in a state where we have legislators who care, listen and support the desires of their constituents. I hope you will put our rights and health above industry interests.

Thank you for your time and for your service.

Michelle Fracasso

Sent from my iPhone