

March 3, 2016

To: The Committee on Children of the CT General Assembly

From: Nancy Bowden, 7 Scotland Road, Bloomfield

Re: HB 5300 – An Act Concerning the Use of Genetically Modified Organisms in Children’s Food

I write in support of HB 5300 as the right next step after Connecticut’s landmark bill (still awaiting implementation) to require GMO labeling.

While many still argue that there is “no proof” that GMO’s (or genetically engineered food products) are harmful to humans, it is vital to remember that NO LONG-TERM studies have been conducted in this country and that the FDA and other regulatory bodies have taken the word of Monsanto that all is well. At this time, I believe many people view Monsanto and its “word” with high levels of distrust. Certainly many other countries are balking at allowing GMO’s into their food supply, sometimes going so far as to ban them altogether, with or without labeling.

Children’s bodies are most susceptible to these unknown and likely damaging products. In addition to potential digestive harm from the ingestion of unnatural food (such as “leaky gut” and major food allergies), the growing of GMO/GE products PROMOTES the use of heavy herbicides (that’s why they were developed), and that problem is being magnified by the evolution of “super weeds” that can withstand the initial strength of those heavily sprayed chemicals.

We live in a sea of chemicals. We all know that, whether we choose to try to fight against it or not. Water is known to include many chemicals and residues from all our pharmaceuticals that cannot be (or are not being) filtered by our water treatment. The soil is being depleted through chemicals that kill the organisms that give that soil the nutritional health to support such things as tomatoes that not only LOOK good but ARE good for humans. Who knows what we are breathing in every day?

Despite early howling that required GMO labeling would be prohibitively expensive (despite the giant marketing budgets of Big Food and Big Ag), in fact we are seeing a move toward that very thing – small notices that this product was not produced with any GMO/GE products. See the side of the Cheerios box for an example of this. I have been on a gluten-free diet for nearly 20 years; while most of us who need that are able to determine whether gluten is potentially included by reading the list of ingredients, the food industry has jumped on that “bandwagon” to tout products as gluten free without any legislative requirements. Certainly they can do the same for GMO/GE, which we cannot detect from current packaging.

Labeling of GMO products is a small but important step in harm reduction. Let us start with the children, whose future is already clouded by the state of the planet and its climate.

Thank you.