

June 19, 2012

Oppose Costly & Confusing Labeling Amendment to the *Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2012*

Senators Sanders and Boxer have introduced an amendment that will result in costly and extreme food labeling requirements. Senate Amendment 2310 to the *Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2012* opens the door for states to require that thousands of common grocery products be repackaged and relabeled if they contain genetically engineered ingredients. This change in U.S. government policy would harm farmers, grocers, food companies and small businesses and the customers they serve. Complex recordkeeping and labeling mandates for businesses would be astronomical, and previous analyses of similar proposals have shown these costs would be passed on to consumers. Millions of dollars in unfunded mandates would also be carried by state governments that would be asked to enforce new rules and regulations.

This provision is a marketing standard, not a science-based U.S. regulatory labeling requirement. The U.S. Government has a strong regulatory program that helps ensure that all foods are safe to be marketed and labeled appropriately. Three agencies: the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) conduct a comprehensive, coordinated regulatory review to ensure that foods produced through biotechnology are safe.

FDA's current science-based policy requires labeling only when foods produced through biotechnology are changed in any way relevant to health, safety or nutrition such as when a known allergen is introduced through the process. In addition, FDA has guidelines that companies can use in making voluntary claims regarding products produced with, or without, the use of biotechnology. This and the United States Department of Agriculture's Organic standards ensure that consumers can make choices based on information that is consistent and accurate.

The following groups are opposed to Senate Amendment 2310:

AACC International
Agricultural Retailers Association
American Bakers Association
American Beverage Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Frozen Food Institute
American Meat Institute
American Seed Trade Association
American Society of Animal Science
American Soybean Association

American Veterinary Medical Association
Apricot Producers of California
Aquatic Plant Management Society
Biotechnology Industry Organization
California Canning Peach Association
Corn Refiners Association
Council for Agricultural Science and Technology
CropLife America
Food Marketing Institute
Grocery Manufacturers Association
National Association of Manufacturers
National Association of Wheat Growers
National Barley Growers Association
National Chicken Council
National Corn Growers Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Grain and Feed Association
National Meat Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Oilseed Processors Association
National Pork Producers Council
National Renderers Association
National Restaurant Association
National Sorghum Producers Association
National Sunflower Association
National Turkey Federation
North American Export Grain Association
North American Millers' Association
North Central Weed Science Society
Northeast Weed Science Society
Snack Food Association
United Egg Producers
U.S. Canola Association
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Weed Science Society of America
Western Society of Weed Science