



July 22, 2015

Dear Members of the House of Representatives:

This week the House is scheduled to debate and vote on HR 1599, the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2015. The Grocery Manufacturers Association believes this legislation is critical to ensuring that Americans have access to safe and affordable food, and we urge all Members of Congress to vote in favor of this important legislation.

America's food manufacturing network is the envy of the world because our supply chain works cooperatively across all fifty states. Today, that system is being put at-risk by activists urging states to enact state-specific GMO labeling laws that are free of exemptions and carve-outs. Their efforts would result in a confusing patchwork of laws that would only confuse consumers and drive up their food costs.

A study by a Cornell University professor found that state GMO labeling mandates could increase grocery prices for a family of four by as much as \$500 per year. State GMO labeling mandates would cost food and beverage manufacturers millions of dollars given the changes to food labels and supply chain systems that would have to be made as a result.

This state-by-state approach is not only disruptive and costly, it's unnecessary. GMO foods have been part of America's food supply for over two decades. Every major health and scientific organization – including the World Health Organization, the American Medical Association, the National Academy of Sciences and FDA -- has concluded that GMOs are safe as any other food. Indeed, GMOs have become essential in helping American farmers grow more crops with less land, water and pesticide.

At the Grocery Manufacturers Association, we believe strongly that the federal approach to food labeling remains the only way to ensure that Americans everywhere can access accurate information about the food they purchase. The bipartisan Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act would put the interests of consumers first by ensuring that the federal government retains its authority at the top of America's food safety pyramid. It would also create a single, unified standard for food to be labeled as "GMO free" as part of a USDA program modeled after the popular USDA Organics program.

The food, beverage and consumer packaged goods industry in the United States generates sales of \$2.1 trillion annually, employs 14 million workers and contributes \$1 trillion in added value to the economy every year. The Grocery Manufacturers Association strongly endorses H.R. 1599 because it would stop the destructive state-level patchwork approach to food labeling, keep consumers well informed and protect manufacturers and farmers. We urge you to support this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pamela G. Bailey". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Pamela G. Bailey
President and Chief Executive Officer
Grocery Manufacturers Association

GROCERY MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

1350 I Street, NW :: Suite 300 :: Washington, DC 20005 :: ph 202-639-5900 :: fx 202-639-5932 :: www.gmaonline.org