

GMA: Vt. GMO Bill a Step in the Wrong Direction for Consumers

WASHINGTON (GMA) — The [Grocery Manufacturers Association](#) [1] issued the following statement in response to the movement of [HB 112](#) [2], a bill that would require mandatory labeling of foods containing genetically modified ingredients, through the Vermont legislature:

“Vermont HB 112 is a step in the wrong direction for consumers. It sets the nation on a costly and misguided path toward a 50-state patchwork of GMO labeling policies that will do nothing to advance the safety of consumers.

“GM crops are safe and have important benefits for people and our planet. They use less water and fewer pesticides, reduce crop prices by 15-30 percent and can help us feed a growing global population of seven billion people. The FDA, World Health Organization, American Medical Association and U.S. National Academy of Science have all found that foods and beverages that contain GM ingredients are safe and materially no different than conventionally produced products. Consumers who prefer to avoid GM ingredients have the option to choose from an array of products already in the marketplace labeled ‘certified organic.’ The government therefore has no compelling interest in warning consumers about foods containing GM ingredients, making HB 112’s legality suspect at best. As we continue to evaluate the impacts of HB 112, we will make a determination about whether litigation is the appropriate response to this misguided legislation.

“We encourage policymakers in Vermont and across the nation to support alternative legislation that would ensure that food labels are accurate and consistent for consumers. Bipartisan federal legislation, the Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act, HR 4432, would require a label on foods containing GM ingredients if the FDA – our nation’s foremost food safety authority – determines there is a health or safety risk. Any labeling of GM ingredients would therefore be based on science, not fear or the varying politics of the 50 states. Specifically, HR 4432 would:

Eliminate Confusion: Remove the confusion and uncertainty of a 50-state patchwork of GMO safety and labeling laws and affirm the FDA as the nation’s authority for the use and labeling of genetically modified food ingredients.

Advance Food Safety: Require the FDA to conduct a safety review of all new GMO traits before they are introduced into commerce. FDA will be empowered to mandate the labeling of GMO food ingredients if the agency determines there is a health, safety or nutrition issue with an ingredient derived from a GMO.

Inform Consumers: The FDA will establish federal standards for companies that want to voluntarily label their product for the absence-of or presence-of GMO food ingredients so that consumers clearly understand their choices in the marketplace.

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Provide Consistency: The FDA will define the term “natural” for its use on food and beverage products so that food and beverage companies and consumers have a consistent legal framework that will guide food labels and inform consumer choice.”

Based in Washington, D.C., the Grocery Manufacturers Association is the voice of more than 300 leading food, beverage and consumer product companies that sustain and enhance the quality of life for hundreds of millions of people in the United States and around the globe.

Founded in 1908, GMA is an active, vocal advocate for its member companies and a trusted source of information about the industry and the products consumers rely on and enjoy every day. The association and its member companies are committed to meeting the needs of consumers through product innovation, responsible business practices and effective public policy solutions developed through a genuine partnership with policymakers and other stakeholders.

In keeping with its founding principles, GMA helps its members produce safe products through a strong and ongoing commitment to scientific research, testing and evaluation and to providing consumers with the products, tools and information they need to achieve a healthy diet and an active lifestyle. 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. www.gmaonline.org [3].

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<http://www.foodmanufacturing.com/news/2014/04/gma-vt-gmo-bill-step-wrong-direction-consumers>

Links:

[1] <https://twitter.com/GroceryMakers>

[2] <http://www.foodmanufacturing.com/news/2014/02/vt-gmo-bill-gains-public-support>

[3] <http://www.gmaonline.org>