



21 March 2013

Honorable Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources;

The organizations below are writing you today to express our **opposition** to legislation that would require the mandatory labeling of genetically engineered (GE) ingredients. HB 2175, HB 2532, and HB 3177 have been introduced and would require the labeling of foods that contains GE ingredients. The labeling of GE ingredients has no scientific basis and is aimed at disparaging mainstream agriculture and the practices that are employed by millions of farmers around the world to produce a healthy, affordable food supply with reduced environmental impact.

The safety of biotech-derived food products has been thoroughly addressed by the international scientific community. The world's top scientific authorities – such as **the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Health Organization, the National Research Council of the National Academies of Sciences, American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Medical Association and the American Dietetic Association** and the regulatory authorities for each of the products have concluded that foods with biotech-derived ingredients pose no more risk to people than any other food.

Practically speaking, biotech crops have been cultivated for more than 15 years, and foods derived from agricultural biotechnology have been eaten by billions of people without any significant health problems.

It is important to remember that biotechnology products in the United States are regulated more strictly than any other agricultural or food product in history. Under the Coordinated Framework for the Regulation of Biotechnology, biotech products are not approved until they have been proven to be safe for human consumption and safe for the environment by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Authority for labeling lies with the federal government. The FDA regulates labeling to ensure consumers have needed nutritional and allergenic information available. The FDA's evaluation of a biotech food focuses on its characteristics, not the method used to develop it. There is no end to examples of information about production practices that consumers may desire to know. As a result, many private, voluntary labeling initiatives have emerged to meet consumer demand. But when it comes to