



February 7, 2014

Dear House Rules Committee,

House Bill 4100 will soon be scheduled for a hearing in front of the House Rules Committee. Oregon Rural Action members support Oregonians having a say on GMO labeling in our state on the November ballot. GMO labeling is important to Eastern Oregon residents and has been one of the longest ORA campaigns dating back to measure 27, in 2002. Oregon Rural Action urges members of the House Rules Committee to support HB4100 and move this debate forward. We feel strongly that consumers have a right to know what is in the food we feed our families. As our elected representatives in Salem we look to you to move this issue in a positive manner to accomplish labeling of all GMOs.

Federal agencies have failed to uphold Congressional intent by allowing genetically engineered foods to be marketed, sold and otherwise used without proper labeling that reveals material facts to the public. Voluntary labeling is insufficient to provide consumers with adequate information on whether or not the food they purchase contains or was produced with genetically engineered material. Mandatory labeling provides a critical scientific method for the continual post-market surveillance to study long-term health impacts and enforcement of food safety laws preventing adulterated foods from reaching consumers.

Conspicuous and clear labeling of genetically engineered food is necessary to ensure that all Oregon consumers are fully informed about the food they purchase and consume. Oregon Rural Action members are concerned about the potential transfer of allergens into food and other health risks, about potential environmental risks associated with the genetic engineering of crops, and wish to protect the rights of those with ethically and religiously based dietary restrictions.

Labeling food produced through genetic engineering will help protect Oregon's agricultural economy and environment. Many trade partners, including the European Union, Japan, and the People's Republic of China, have established, or are in the process of implementing mandatory labeling requirements for genetically engineered food. Adoption and implementation of mandatory labeling requirements for genetically engineered food produced in Oregon would facilitate international trade by allowing American farmers and companies to export and appropriately market their products – both genetically engineered and non-genetically engineered – to foreign customers.

Let it be shown that members of Oregon Rural Action fully support H.B. 4100 and want the democratic right to choose the foods they feed their families and urge the House Rules Committee to take full and fair action on House Bill 4100 and move the legislation toward the November ballot.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Wagner". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Karen Wagner
Director, Oregon Rural Action

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