

GMO, Food Safety and the “Labeling of Natural Foods”: US Congress’ Anti-Consumer “DARK Act” Legislation.”Denying Americans the Right to Know”

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On March 25, House Rep. Mike Pompeo (R. KS) introduced HR 1599: Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act of 2015.

It seeks “(t)o amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to food produced from, containing, or consisting of a bioengineered organism, the labeling of natural foods, and for other purposes.”

Critics call the measure the Denying Americans the Right to Know (DARK) Act. It blocks state and local efforts to require GMO labeling.

Current Vermont, Connecticut and Maine laws requiring labels on GMO foods and ingredients would be null and void.

The FDA would be prevented from establishing a national mandatory standard. Current agency policy lets companies voluntarily label GMO foods. No major company does so.

DARK Act legislation lets the industry-controlled FDA approve foods for sale under a system requiring companies merely to notify the agency about products “substantially equivalent” to non-GMOs.

Labeling genetically modified foods and ingredients “natural” is willful deception. DARK legislation lets federal regulators define the term to include harmful to health GMOs.

It would block states from prohibiting “natural” labeling for GMO foods.

The DARK Act’s latest version includes a section instructing the USDA to set legal rules for non-GMO labels – a provision able to establish weaker standards than already.

DARK Act legislation is a Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA) initiative. It aims to keep consumers more uninformed about what they eat than already – including about the hazards of harmful to health GMO foods and ingredients.

GMA and its member companies lobby Congress intensively to block GMO labeling – plus efforts against labeling ballot initiatives in California, Washington, Oregon and Colorado.

Enacting HR 1599 would let food producers continue to use dangerous GMOs while denying consumers the right to know what they’re eating.

In February, Rep. Peter DeFazio (D. OR) introduced HR 913: Genetically Engineered Food Right-to-Know Act - "to require that genetically engineered food and foods that contain genetically engineered ingredients be labeled accordingly."

Barbara Boxer (D. CA) introduced a comparable Senate version. They require labeling GMO foods and ingredients.

Given industry opposition, odds for passage are virtually nil. Mass consumer outrage is needed.

Over 90% of Americans support GMO labeling. Congress won't mandate it without sustained popular pressure.

The [Institute for Responsible Technology](#) lists 10 reasons to avoid GMOs.

1. Independent studies show they harm human health. They cause organ damage, gastrointestinal and immune system disorders, accelerated aging, infertility, and other longterm problems.
2. GMO soil contamination is permanent - threatening the health of future generations.
3. GMOs require increased herbicide use, increasing health hazards.
4. Gene mixing from unrelated species risk dangerous unpredictable side effects - "new toxins, allergens, carcinogens and nutritional deficiencies."
5. Government oversight protecting consumers is virtually nonexistent. Industry executives control federal agencies. Rules they mandate serve bottom line interests, not consumer health and welfare.
6. Monsanto and other biotech giants promoted agent orange, PCBs and DDT safety. Now they're using the same phony research claiming GMOs are safe to eat.
7. Independent research revealing GMO health hazards is suppressed. Scientists discovering serious problems are "attacked, gagged, fired, threatened and denied funding."
8. GMOs cause irreparable environmental damage. They "harm birds, insects, amphibians, marine ecosystems and soil organisms. They reduce bio-diversity, pollute water resources and are unsustainable."
9. GMOs don't increase crop yields as fraudulently touted. In some cases, yields decline.
10. Avoiding GMOs is the only way to help eliminate them altogether. What industry can't sell, it won't produce.

You are what you eat. The phrase has been around a lot time. It hits home hard today given the harm to human health caused by GMOs and other toxins contaminating the typical Western diet.

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