

From: Senator Bob Menendez Senator_Menendez@menendez.senate.gov
Subject: Response from Senator Menendez
Date: March 27, 2015 at 5:19 PM
To: kimi@thewei.com

SB

BOB MENENDEZ
UNITED STATES SENATOR
FOR NEW JERSEY

Dear Ms. Wei:

Thank you for contacting me to express your support for the Genetically Engineered Food Right-to-Know Act. Your opinion is very important to me, and I appreciate the opportunity to respond to you on this critical issue.

As you may know, the Genetically Engineered Food Right-to-Know Act would amend the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to deem any food destined for human consumption as misbranded if it has been genetically engineered or contains genetically engineered ingredients, unless such information is clearly disclosed. The bill labels food as genetically engineered if it is an organism that is the product of intentional genetic engineering or contains any ingredients that are intentionally genetically engineered. This legislation has been introduced before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, which I am not a member of. However, should the bill be presented for a vote before the full United States Senate, I will be sure to keep your views in mind.

As the Garden State, New Jersey has a proud reputation as a leader in many agricultural fields, and I am committed to preserving this legacy. While farmers have naturally modified crops to improve growth and yields for centuries, recent advances in genetic engineering have raised questions about the safety of some of these food products. I believe we must be prudent when approving genetically modified food but I also recognize that unnecessarily labeling inherently safe products, could actually risk confusing and misleading consumers. It is vitally important that we fully understand the impact of these practices on our food supply and our health while harnessing the advantages of modern science and innovation.

Currently, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) oversees the implementation of food labeling set forth by the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. Foods that must be labeled include most prepared foods, such as breads, cereals, canned and frozen foods, snacks, desserts, and drinks. Foods that do not have to be labeled are called "conventional foods," which include raw produce such as fruits, vegetables and fish. I continue to believe these standards should be regulated on the national level by objective scientific experts in the FDA rather than through a patchwork of state regulations that could have the unintended consequence of confusing consumers. Please know that I will continue to look for ways to ensure that Americans have access to appropriate and accurate nutritional information, without misleading consumers or imposing overly onerous requirements on food producers.

Again, thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of further assistance. You may also visit my website (<http://menendez.senate.gov>) to learn more about how I am standing up for New Jersey families in the United States Senate.

Sincerely,



BOB MENENDEZ
United States Senator





Please do not reply to this e-mail as this address is not monitored. To contact my office, please use the contact form found on my website at <http://menendez.senate.gov/contact/>