



National Grocers Association

July 25, 2006

Senator Judd Gregg
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Gregg:

On behalf of the National Grocers Association (N.G.A.), I am writing to encourage you to attend the hearing on the National Uniformity for Food Act (S. 3128) on Thursday, July 27 at 10:00 a.m. in the HELP Committee. On March 8, the House passed similar legislation (H.R. 4167) with strong bipartisan support. This legislation is a top priority for retail and wholesale grocers as well as grocery manufacturers.

The National Uniformity for Food Act is common-sense legislation that will help consumers make educated decisions in an ever-changing and currently confusing food labeling environment. The legislation will provide consumers with a single set of consistent, science-based food safety regulations for food products sold in all 50 states.

A uniform national standard for food safety will enhance the efficiencies that allow the grocery industry to provide America's consumers with some of the safest and most affordable food in the world. Under our current system, states may impose differing and sometimes contradictory, regulations. This system poses significant hardships for the entire grocery industry from manufacturers to wholesalers and retailers. Wholesalers that distribute to multiple states may find themselves having to segregate products according to differing state requirements. Multi-state retailers and grocery manufacturers face hardships as they may be required to label identical products differently according to state requirements—a tremendous burden.

The legislation would not impact state authority on traditional local food enforcement matters such as freshness dating, grade labeling, state inspection stamps and recalls.

Passage of the National Uniformity for Food Act will benefit America's consumers and retail and wholesale grocers. I urge you to attend the hearing on Thursday and consider cosponsoring this important legislation. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Erik R. Lieberman
Director of Government Affairs