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February 22, 2006

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf
United States House of Representatives
241 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Sent via fax: 1-202-225-0437

Dear Congressman Wolf:

I am writing in **support of H.R. 4167, which would provide national, uniform food safety standards and warning requirements for food.** Current regulations governing food safety standards and warning requirements differ from state to state, and are sometimes inconsistent. The proposed National Uniformity for Food Act would synchronize these various systems, while continuing to recognize the role of state governments in this process.

Allowing companies to utilize the same labeling for products sold in all 50 states benefits my membership by helping to control production costs and the subsequent costs to the consumer without compromising consumer safety. **We have 567 food and beverage manufacturers employing over 43,051 employees in the Commonwealth.** Further, the food manufacturing employees have experienced a 16% increase in average weekly wages over the last four years. So, any bill that will help make food manufacturers more competitive is good for Virginia.

The VMA appreciates the importance of food safety and maintaining consumer confidence in the food supply, and as such, supports this proposal. H.R. 4167 envisions a comprehensive and consistent national system to inform consumers of potential risks or health hazards, while at the same time, limiting costly and sometimes confusing state-by-state labeling requirements. The bill also envisions a vital role for the states, which could petition the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to adopt their food safety standards and warning requirements nationally. If approved by the FDA, food manufacturers would incorporate the requirements, thus providing all consumers nationwide with the same information.

The VMA strongly supports H.R. 4167. I respectfully ask that you support this legislation on the House floor. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brett A. Vassey
President & CEO

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