

Mr. Chairman, I am deeply disturbed by this proposal that would strip away states' ability to protect their citizens' food supply. Today's consideration of the "National Food Uniformity Act" represents the fourth time this bill has been considered since I have come to Congress. Congress and the public have repeatedly shown that they are opposed to the weakening of food safety laws, and yet we are forced to continue this debate.

Each year, food-borne illnesses result in 76 million illnesses, 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths. This bill would nullify approximately 200 state laws aimed at reducing the incidence of these food-borne illnesses.

It's shameful that this bill does not create any uniform safety standards, but simply strips away states' rights to protect their residents. I'm sympathetic to some manufacturers' concerns about the burdens of multiple labeling and food standards. However, state food safety regulations have protected millions of American consumers and I cannot support legislation that does not put in place any comparable national standards.