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SUPPORT S. 510 - The FDA Food Safety Modernization Act

Foodborne disease outbreaks in the past few years

– linked to everything from spinach and peppers to peanut products and cookie dough – highlight the need to bring our food-safety laws into the 21st century. This legislation will update laws passed by Congress in the 1930's, and enjoys broad support from food safety experts and consumer and industry associations.

This bipartisan measure includes key provisions that will protect consumers, as well as small growers and processors, by:

- Providing FDA, for the first time, with a specific statutory mandate to prevent foodborne illness.
- Requiring food processors to identify where contamination may occur in the food production process, and then requiring them to take steps to prevent the contamination.
- Basing the frequency of FDA food processing plant inspections on the risk of the product being produced, increasing the frequency of foreign inspections, and establishing, for the first time, a statutory minimum frequency for FDA inspections of domestic food processing facilities.
- Requiring imported food to meet the same safety standards as food produced in the U.S.
- Establishing science-based minimum standards for safe agricultural production of fresh fruits and vegetables that pose the highest risk.
- Improving coordination across federal, state, and local governments and providing grants to build state and local capacity for foodborne illness detection, surveillance, testing, and response.
- Providing FDA, for the first time, with mandatory recall authority.
- Providing small businesses (both growers and processors) with tailored measures that limit unnecessary regulatory requirements.
- Directing FDA to publish several user-friendly, small entity compliance guides to assist firms with the implementation of new practices and requirements.
- Offering grants to enhance education, training, and technical assistance related to compliance with the new requirements.
- Establishing traceability requirements that strike the right balance between protecting public health and preventing any undue burden to small businesses.