



LATE TESTIMONY

February 23, 2009

The Honorable Robert N. Herkes
Chair, House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

The Honorable Jon Riki Karamatsu
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary

RE: HB 1611 (Say) – OPPOSE

Dear Chair Herkes, Chair Karamatsu and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA), I am writing to express our opposition to House Bill 1611, which would require labeling of meat and fish that has been gas-treated.

GMA represents the world's leading food, beverage and consumer products companies. The Association promotes sound public policy, champions initiatives that increase productivity and growth and helps to protect the safety and security of the food supply through scientific excellence. The GMA board of directors is comprised of fifty-two chief executive officers from the Association's member companies. The \$2.1 trillion food, beverage and consumer packaged goods industry employs 14 million workers, and contributes over \$1 trillion in added value to the nation's economy. In Hawaii, GMA member companies employ 438 people at 10 facilities.

GMA promotes a uniform federal approach to the regulation of food labeling, and urges states to support the appropriate federal regulatory agencies to avoid a patchwork of varying state food labeling standards that would make compliance virtually impossible for our manufacturers.

Because gas treatment of meat and fish has been determined to be safe, there is no need for Hawaii to require a label that may mislead consumers by suggesting a warning. FDA has accepted several Generally Recognized As Safe (GRAS) notifications on the use of carbon monoxide in modified atmospheric packaging when used for maintaining wholesomeness, provide flexibility in distribution and reduce shrinkage of the meat.

For these reasons, the Grocery Manufacturers Association must respectfully oppose HB 1611.

Sincerely,

Caroline Silveira
Director, State Affairs
Grocery Manufacturers Association

GROCERY MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

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