



Consumer Federation of America

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President Obama to Sign FDA Food Safety Modernization Act into Law Today

Consumer Federation of America applauded President Obama's signing of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act into law today.

"We thank President Obama for signing into law the most comprehensive reform of the Food and Drug Administration's microbiological food safety program in 70 years," said Chris Waldrop, director of CFA's Food Policy Institute. "The authorities in the new law are critical to protecting consumers from foodborne disease."

The FDA Food Safety Modernization Act requires a fundamental shift in the Food and Drug Administration's food safety program from reacting to illness and deaths to preventing bacterial contamination in the first place. The law requires the agency, food processors and farmers to identify areas of risk and act to prevent contamination; requires the FDA to inspect food processing plants on a more frequent basis; requires the FDA to assure that imported food is as safe as domestically produced food; and provides the agency with mandatory recall authority.

"Food safety isn't partisan," said Carol L. Tucker-Foreman, distinguished fellow at CFA's Food Policy Institute. "Members of Congress don't want their constituents to suffer because they were exposed to peanut butter, spinach, eggs or some other food that looked great but was tainted by dangerous bacteria. Members of Congress don't want their farmers or processors losing business because their products were associated with an outbreak. And Members of Congress surely know that the new law won't help anyone – consumers, farmers or processors – if there's no money for FDA to implement it."

"We think the same good sense that led Congress to work right up to the last minute of the last Congress to shape this targeted and limited new law, will prevail when funding decisions are made this year," Tucker-Foreman continued.

Passage of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act could not have been possible without the strong leadership of food safety champions in Congress. CFA is deeply appreciative of the long dedication to passage of food safety legislation of Representatives Henry Waxman, John Dingell, Rosa DeLauro, Bart Stupak and Frank Pallone, and Senators Richard Durbin and Tom Harkin.

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The Consumer Federation of America is an association of nearly 300 nonprofit consumer organizations that was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy and education.