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## **KOHL INTRODUCES BILL TO INCREASE PENALTIES FOR THOSE WHO DELIBERATELY ENDANGER FOOD SAFETY**

WASHINGTON – Today, Senator Kohl introduced the Food Safety Accountability Act which increases criminal penalties on those individuals who deliberately put our food supply in jeopardy. Knowingly distributing adulterated food is merely a misdemeanor under current law, and the fines that result from criminal violations fail to protect the public from harmful products. This legislation allow prosecutors to seek up to 10 years jail time for people who threaten public health by knowingly placing contaminated food products into the food supply. This bill gives the Department of Justice the tools it needs to prosecute crime involving food safety and will hold accountable those who knowingly violate food safety laws. This is a necessary step toward making our food supply safer.

**“Last year’s recall of a half billion eggs highlights the need for strong criminal penalties for those who are willing to seek a profit over protecting public health,” Kohl said. “I believe people who purposefully and knowingly endanger lives should be punished by more than a slap on the wrist. This legislation increases the penalty from a misdemeanor to a felony offense which carries with it a maximum 10 year prison sentence.”**

Kohl is the chairman of the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over funding for the FDA, and in 2007 launched a broad review of the nation’s web of food safety laws to identify weaknesses. Subsequently, Kohl has worked to increase the FDA’s corps of food safety inspectors domestically and abroad and developed new, regional rapid response teams across the country to identify and isolate contaminated produce at its source.

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