

January 4, 2011

Dingell's Historic Food Safety Legislation Becomes Law

First Major Food Safety System Overhaul in 70 Years is signed into law by President Obama

Washington, DC - Dean of the United States House of Representatives, John D. Dingell applauds the President today for signing into law, the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act. This landmark reform, authored and fought for by Dingell, overhauls the nation's food safety system; improves the capacity of FDA and manufacturers to prevent food safety problems; and empowers FDA to detect and immediately respond to food-borne illness outbreaks.

The many recalls that have confronted American consumers over the years—jalapeños, peanuts, melamine in milk, spinach, and eggs—exposed the need to improve food safety regulating capacity to adequately protect American consumers. The FDA Food Safety Modernization Act grants the Food and Drug Administration the authorities and resources it needs to effectively do its job by:

- Creating shared responsibility between FDA and food manufacturers to keep the food supply safe;
- Requiring manufacturers to implement preventive systems to stop outbreaks before they occur;
- Requiring the FDA to inspect food facilities—foreign and domestic—more frequently;
- Authorizing the FDA to more directly ensure imported foods meet US safety standards; and,
- Granting the FDA new enforcement tools, including mandatory recall authority, authority to detain tainted product, and protection for employees who uncover food safety violations.

“This law is long overdue,” said Dingell. “Each year, 48 million Americans are sickened from consuming contaminated food and 3,000 of these people die. We must prevent millions of Americans from suffering needlessly from food borne illness each year, and I am happy that this reform is finally law. Now we must take the next step to ensure that the new authorities are fully funded to ensure the FDA can do its work to protect the American people.”

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