



CENTER for BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Because life is good.

*working through science, law and creative media to secure a future for all species,
great or small, hovering on the brink of extinction.*

September 19, 2012

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The Honorable Herb J. Wesson Jr., Chair
Rules, Elections & Intergovernmental Relations Committee
City Council
City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: Prop. 37- California Right to Know Genetically Engineered Food Act;
Council File 12-0002-S67**

Dear Chairman Wesson, and Councilmembers LaBonge and Huizar,

On behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity and our 370,000 members and supporters across the U.S, including the City of Los Angeles, we urge the Rules, Elections & Intergovernmental Relations Committee to pass the resolution of Councilman Paul Koretz in support Proposition 37, the "California Right to Know Genetically Engineered Food Act."

Prop. 37 is a common-sense November ballot measure that will help consumers make informed choices about their food. It simply requires labels letting consumers know if foods are genetically modified. Genetically engineered food is a plant or meat product that has had its DNA artificially altered in a laboratory by genes from other plants, animals, viruses, or bacteria. This type of genetic alteration is not found in nature and is experimental.

Genetic engineering has been associated with biodiversity loss, an overall increase in pesticide use, the emergence of super weeds, and the unintentional contamination of conventional and organic crops. There are also serious concerns about the safety of genetically engineered food, which has not been proven safe in an absence of long-term health studies. A growing body of peer-reviewed studies has linked these foods to allergies, organ problems, and other health problems.

In California, like most of the county, there are no requirements to inform consumers if their food contains genetically modified food. Between 40-70% of foods in grocery stores in California contain some genetically engineered ingredients, but we don't know the exact details because there are no labeling requirements.

This is a fiscally sound proposal because the costs to California consumers and the state are negligible. Economic analysis for Prop. 37 concludes that there would be "no increases in

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Jonathan Evans, Toxics and Endangered Species Campaign Director & Staff Attorney

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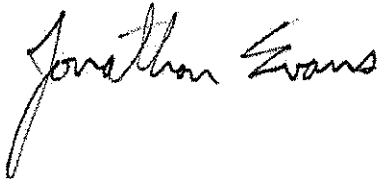
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prices as a result of the relabeling required.” In Europe, introduction of GMO labeling produced no increase in food costs. According to the State Legislative Analysts Office costs to regulate the program would range from a few hundred thousand dollars to one million dollars annually. These are minimal costs when it comes to disclosures about food safety.

Editorial boards like the North County times and Californian have come out in favor of the consumers’ right to know (attached EDITORIAL: Yes on Prop. 37). It’s time for the City of Los Angeles to also help support the rights of consumers to know what they eat. Californians deserve the right to know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jonathan Evans". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jonathan Evans

cc (via email):

Councilmember Ed Reyes
Councilmember Paul Krekorian
Councilmember Dennis Zine
Councilmember Paul Koretz
Councilmember Tony Cardenas
Councilmember Richard Alarcon
Councilmember Bernard Parks
Councilmember Jan Perry
Councilmember Bill Rosendahl
Councilmember Mitchell Englander
Councilmember Eric Garcetti
Councilmember Joe Buscaino