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May 14, 2014

Councilmember Paul Koretz
Los Angeles City Council
200 North Spring Street, Room 440
Los Angeles, CA 90012

CF
Re: Support for 14-0002-S31 (Resolution to include in the City's 2013-14 State Legislative Program support of SB1381, which would require labeling of genetically engineered foods)

Dear Councilmember Koretz and the Los Angeles City Council,

Californians for GE Food Labeling is a diverse group of food, farming, and health groups representing tens of thousands of people across California who want to know what's in our food and how it's grown so we can make informed choices about the food we put on our table and feed our family. We are writing to thank you for the introduction of a resolution supporting SB 1381 to the City's 2013-14 State Legislative Program. As a sponsor SB 1381, we would like to communicate our support for the resolution.

The people of California have the right to know how our food is produced and should have the choice to avoid purchasing foods that are genetically engineered (GE). If enacted into law, SB 1381 would provide people across the state with critical information to make informed choices by requiring GE foods sold in California to be labeled as such. Californians would join people around the world, people who have the ability to chose to avoid GE foods for environmental, health, economic, religious, and ethical reasons.

California has the opportunity to lead the nation on this issue. More than 64 other countries have enacted laws specifically focused on overseeing genetically engineered crops and foods, or their labeling. As you know, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not require the labeling of genetically engineered foods. In its absence, states have a duty to their people, environment, and agricultural economy to enact this right.

There is overwhelming public support for this common sense solution throughout California and in particular, Los Angeles. Polls both before and after the November 2012 elections for Proposition 37 showed that 67% of Californians supported California having its own GE food labeling law. In total, more than 6 million Californians voted in favor of Prop 37. And,

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immediate post-election polling showed 21% of all voters who voted *against* Prop 37 reported they actually *support* labeling of GE foods.

The opposition spent more than \$45 million on advertising and other oppositional tactics to confuse voters, resulting in a narrow victory. Despite this, polls today continue to indicate that the majority of Californians want the labeling of GE foods. Further, because there is yet no mandatory labeling of GE foods, health professionals have no way of tracking if these foods are causing adverse health effects. SB 1381 would help provide researchers with the beginnings of a means to track ingestion of GE foods in order to determine if there are adverse health effects.

Labeling genetically engineered food is about transparency and empowering people. With clear labels, we can make our own informed decisions.

Sincerely,



Kristin Urquiza
Co-coordinator Californians for GE Food Labeling

Californians for GE Food Labeling coalition, a diverse group of food, farming and health groups including Biosafety Alliance, CalPIRG, Californians for Pesticide Reform, California State Grange, Center for Food Safety, Consumers Union, Environmental Working Group, Food & Agriculture Caucus of the Democratic Party, Food Democracy Now!, Food & Water Watch, Friends of the Earth, Good Earth Natural Foods, LabelGMOs.org, Moms Advocating Sustainability, Organic Consumers Association, Pesticide Action Network and Pesticide Watch.

Our coalition is reaching out to the over **3,000 organizations that supported Proposition 37 to support SB 1381**. Most of the major health, faith, labor, environmental and consumer groups in California endorsed Prop 37, including California Nurses Association, California Democratic Party, California Labor Federation, United Farm Workers, American Public Health Association, Consumers Union, California Council of Churches, Sierra Club, Whole Foods Market, Natural Resources Defense Council, Consumer Federation of America, Breast Cancer Fund and many others. You can review the full list at: <http://www.carighttoknow.org/endorsements>

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