



President Gene Hugoson, Minnesota • President-elect Nathan Rudgers, New York
Vice President J. Carlton Courter, III, Virginia • Secretary-Treasurer Ralph Peck, Montana
Past President Patrick A. Takasugi, Idaho

May 13, 2004

House Agriculture Committee Members
House Energy and Commerce Committee Members
Senate Agriculture Committee Members
Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee Members

Dear Member of Congress:

The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) strongly opposes passage of the National Uniformity for Food Act of 2003 (H.R. 2699).

We are concerned that the bill goes beyond its stated purpose of providing uniform food safety warning notification requirements and expands federal preemption under the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act. In particular, we believe the bill could threaten existing state food safety programs and otherwise jeopardize existing state/federal food safety cooperative programs such as those relating to Grade A milk, retail food protection and shellfish sanitation.

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NASDA further believes that it is this existing food safety system which now forms the first line of defense against the growing threat of a terrorist attack against our nation's food supply. Even as discussions are ongoing with our federal partners in the Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services about ways to strengthen our means to prevent, detect and respond to an attack, this bill threatens to undermine the very system that is needed now more than ever.

NASDA would welcome the opportunity to discuss ways that the bill could be amended to achieve its intent while limiting the impact on critical food safety regulatory programs at local and state levels.

Sincerely,

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Nathan Rudgers
Chairman, NASDA Food Regulation & Nutrition Committee
Commissioner, New York Department of Agriculture & Markets



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