

# The Connecticut General Assembly



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 3, 2016

Contact: Tess Koenigsmark  
(860)240-8790

## **Rep. Diana Urban, Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Founder Jerry Greenfield Champion GMO Labeling**

*Advocates push for labeling of foods with genetically modified ingredients*

**Committee on Children House Chair Diana Urban** (D-North Stonington, Stonington) held a press conference today in support of labeling foods that contain genetically modified ingredients. She was joined by advocates for GMO labeling, including representatives from the food industry.

Representative Urban and State **Senator Danté Bartolomeo** (D-Meriden), who is co-chair of the Children's Committee, have introduced HB 5300, An Act Concerning the Use of Genetically Modified Organisms in Children's Food. The bill would require that children's foods containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs) be labeled.

"It is critical that we protect our children as their bodies grow," **Rep. Urban** said. "There are many questions about the impact of GMOs on children's developing bodies and immune systems. Over 60 countries have restrictions on GMOs. It is the right thing to require labeling of GMOs. We should be able to make informed choices about what our children eat."

"We should not be feeding our children anything containing GMOs. Their cell development is too rapid to risk digesting and metabolizing genetically engineered organisms," said **Sen. Bartolomeo**. "We've been talking about GMOs for a few years here in the state legislature, and – as always – it is vitally important for people to become educated about GMOs and for us to give parents a choice regarding labeling and some peace of mind when it comes to their children."

Speakers urged Connecticut to follow in the footsteps of Vermont, which was the first state to pass GMO labeling legislation without a trigger. Connecticut passed a GMO

labeling bill in 2013, but it won't go into effect until Northeast states with a combined population of 20 million also adopt similar laws.

"I was incredibly pleased to be in Hartford in 2013 to support the campaign that made Connecticut the first state in the nation to pass GMO labeling legislation," said Jerry Greenfield, Founder of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream. "I am also proud that my home state of Vermont will require GMO labeling starting July 1st of this year. It's great to be back in Connecticut to urge lawmakers to remove the trigger and join Vermont in standing up for its citizens' right to know what is in their food."

"The citizens of Connecticut have waited long enough to know what is in the food we are feeding ourselves and our families," said Tara Cook-Littman, Founder of Citizens for GMO labeling. "If Vermont can implement their GMO labeling law in July why can't we?"

"Consumers have a right to know what is in their food," said Michael Smulders, Founder of Bakery on Main, an East Hartford bakery that uses only non-GMO ingredients. "Bakery On Main fields calls and e-mails every day asking for minute detail on what we put into our products. When we provide transparency and tell them, they become loyal fans."

###