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Favorable HB 97 - Baby Food - Toxic Heavy Metals - Testing and Labeling

Dear Chair and HGO committee Delegates,

One would think that baby foods were already tested for safety and freedom from toxic metals and chemicals but as we know, we cannot always depend on industry to monitor themselves for safety of their products. Think, for example, of the finding that J&J had for decades known that they had asbestos in baby powder and they did nothing about it.

So it seems prudent to protect babies by making sure manufacturers of baby food are testing their product for safety regarding toxic content which we know can be detrimental to the health of the baby and that they inform the parent/guardian of the content.

I questioned if this was primarily the responsibility of the FDA but in researching the question discovered two papers from scholars at the Vermont Law School and University of Indian School of Law, respectively. These scholars cited state law in California that later became a national standard to limit antibiotic use in animal feed because of its potential public health implications. These scholars implored more states to take the initiative like CA to enact food safety regulations of their own. They said that states need to fill in the gaps in the current patchwork of US food regulations and serve as laboratories for developing new rules and standards.

I believe that this bill could set such a standard and is needed to ensure the safety and quality of food for our most vulnerable, our babies. Please vote **Favorable for HB97**.

Thank you.

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