

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 2

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2001 Regular Session  
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(PRE-FILED)

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By: **Delegate Stern**

Requested: September 26, 2000

Introduced and read first time: January 10, 2001

Assigned to: Environmental Matters

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **United States Food and Drug Administration - Labeling Laws and Policies**  
3 **Relating to Allergenic Ingredients in Food**

4 FOR the purpose of requesting the United States Food and Drug Administration  
5 (FDA) to create a symbol for display on food packages to indicate that certain  
6 allergenic ingredients are contained in certain packaged food; requesting the  
7 FDA to establish a toll-free line which will provide certain information;  
8 requesting the FDA to develop certain rules and guidelines for labeling food  
9 products that contain allergenic ingredients; requesting the FDA to prohibit the  
10 use of certain generic terms; requesting the FDA to establish a list of standard  
11 names for certain products; and generally relating to labeling laws and policies  
12 for allergenic ingredients in food.

13 WHEREAS, Approximately 6 million Americans (or 2% of the population) suffer  
14 from food allergies; and

15 WHEREAS, An estimated 125 deaths per year result from fatal allergic  
16 reactions to food; and

17 WHEREAS, Eating foods that contain even trace amounts of allergenic  
18 ingredients can lead to symptoms that range from a tingling sensation in the mouth,  
19 swelling of the tongue and the throat, difficulty breathing, hives, vomiting, abdominal  
20 cramps, diarrhea, drop in blood pressure, loss of consciousness, to death; and

21 WHEREAS, The best way for individuals to manage food allergies is to strictly  
22 avoid foods or food additives to which they are allergic; and

23 WHEREAS, It is important for individuals with food allergies to be able to  
24 identify ingredients in the food they eat; and

25 WHEREAS, Labeling is an appropriate way to enable "hyperreactive"  
26 individuals to avoid exposure to allergenic ingredients that could trigger an allergic  
27 reaction; and

1 WHEREAS, Individuals with food allergies find it extremely difficult to  
2 determine whether everyday foods are safe for them or their family members to eat;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Current labeling laws and regulations make it very difficult to find  
5 safe food; and

6 WHEREAS, Composite food products that are the result of several producers  
7 result in hidden allergenic ingredients that can cause serious reactions; and

8 WHEREAS, The prevalence and seriousness of food allergies are well-known  
9 and documented; now, therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the United  
11 States Food and Drug Administration is requested to create a symbol that will be  
12 prominently displayed on food packages to alert consumers that the product contains  
13 allergenic ingredients; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the FDA is requested to establish a toll-free hot line where  
15 consumers can obtain reliable food ingredient information, and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the FDA is requested to require that food labels specify that  
17 an allergenic ingredient, even in insignificant levels, has been used in a product; and  
18 be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the FDA is requested to prohibit the use of generic terms such  
20 as "flavoring" and specifically require food processors and manufacturers to specify  
21 every ingredient included in generic terms; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the FDA is requested to develop industry guidelines to  
23 identify and prevent the migration of allergenic ingredients from one product to  
24 another during processing and preparation; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the FDA is requested to require the use of standard product  
26 names to prevent the same product being called several different names; and be it  
27 further

28 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be mailed by the Department of  
29 Legislative Services to Commissioner James E. Henney, Food and Drug  
30 Administration, 14-71 Parklawn Building, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland  
31 20857.