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## **House Bill 1449 - The Case for Raw Milk Sales in Maryland**

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Let's start with raw meat. The USDA inspects meat processing facilities to ensure cleanliness, proper handling, and safe storage. From the farm to the grocery store, there are strict regulations to maintain quality and prevent contamination. Despite being raw, consumers are free to purchase and prepare their meat as they see fit.

Raw milk is no different. Dairy farmers use high-tech milking machines under strict sanitary conditions. Equipment is regularly inspected for cleanliness, and dairy farms that sell raw milk in other states meet rigorous standards to ensure safety. Like raw meat, there is always a possibility of contamination—but how often does that happen? And when it does, how many people suffer from foodborne illness?

If you've purchased bad meat, you know the smell alone tells you not to eat it. The same principle applies to raw milk. If it spoils, nature provides a clear warning. This is the same with pasteurized milk, which can also harbor harmful bacteria even after processing.

Look at a carton of pasteurized, homogenized milk. Across the label, you'll see *Vitamin A & D added*. Why? Because the heating and processing strip away essential nutrients. What's added back is a synthetic version of vitamins A and D—forms that your body does not recognize or absorb as efficiently as the real thing.

Raw milk, on the other hand, is a complete, nutrient-dense food. It contains naturally occurring calcium, iron, vitamins A, C, D, and K, phosphorus, zinc, and omega-3 fatty acids. It also provides digestive enzymes and probiotics, which aid in digestion and gut health. Many elderly individuals struggle to digest processed milk because it lacks these enzymes. Children suffering from eczema, asthma, and allergies are often encouraged to consume raw milk due to its healing properties. In many communities, raw milk is considered a *superfood*.

If raw milk is so dangerous, why does Pennsylvania allow it to be sold in grocery stores? Every Friday, at Saubel's Market in Shrewsbury, PA, you'll find a long line of Maryland residents driving across the state line just to purchase raw milk. Are we to believe that drinking raw milk in Pennsylvania is perfectly safe, but in Maryland, it suddenly becomes deadly? That's simply illogical.

It's time for Maryland to align with science, consumer freedom, and common sense. Families deserve the right to choose raw milk—just as they do with raw meat, sushi, and countless other foods that require proper handling. Let's put an end to outdated regulations and allow Marylanders to purchase raw milk in their own state.