

March 6, 2025

Health and Government Operations Committee
240 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and Committee Members:

My name is Weston Young and I am a resident of Worcester County. I am writing in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 1449 on the Direct-to-Consumer Sale of Raw Milk for Human Consumption.

Throughout much of human history, milk was consumed raw. The founding fathers of our country drank raw milk¹. Present-day pastoral communities, like the Maasai in East Africa, drink raw milk². In terms of livestock, it should be noted that a healthy animal is going to produce a healthy product, be it in meat, milk, or eggs. These healthy products in turn make us healthy. Specifically to cows, they've been domesticated for nearly 10,000 years and we have been consuming raw milk for nearly as long^{3,4,5}. Nearly all dairy farmers I know drink the raw milk their cows produce, whereas it is currently illegal for them to sell that same unadulterated product to their neighbors.

While there are inherent risks in consuming milk in general, the arguments of the health professionals against raw milk could easily be applied to food products like raw oysters, farm-fresh room-temperature chicken eggs, unpasteurized juices and ciders, and innocent-looking raw sprouts⁶, among many other foods that are perfectly legal to consume but could potentially carry food-borne illnesses like E. Coli or Salmonella. This

¹ Cargill, Amanda. 2018. [What Did the Founding Fathers Eat and Drink as They Started a Revolution?](#) *Smithsonian Magazine*.

² Barron, Joshua. 2023. Being Maasai: [An ethnographic and linguistic bibliography](#), *Academia.edu*.

³ Arbuckle BS, Price MD, Hongo H, and Öksüz B. 2016. [Documenting the initial appearance of domestic cattle in the Eastern Fertile Crescent \(northern Iraq and western Iran\)](#). *Journal of Archaeological Science* 72:1-9.

⁴ MacHugh DE, Larson G, and Orlando L. 2017. [Taming the Past: Ancient DNA and the Study of Animal Domestication](#). *Annual Review of Animal Biosciences* 5(1):329-351.

⁵ Teasdale MD, and Bradley DG. 2012. [The Origins of Cattle](#). *Bovine Genomics*: Wiley-Blackwell. p 1-10.

⁶ [Safer Food Choices](#), *cdc.gov*.

proposed bill includes a permitting process, adequate labeling, and a pretty clarifying statement about the risk of consumption.

The legalization of raw milk provides consumers in Maryland a nutritionally superior product (pasteurization kills or severely diminishes the good enzymes, probiotics, and nutrients, too), additional freedom of choice, and economic sustainability for small farmers.

The bill in question is a reasonable approach to the legalization of raw milk and provides sufficient regulations to safely allow direct-to-consumer sales for human consumption. I ask that you support this bipartisan, common sense bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'W' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

Weston Young