



Testimony in Strong Opposition to HB1023 – Lab-Grown Meat Prohibition

Hearing before the House Health and Government Operations Committee

March 3, 2026, 1:00 p.m.

Submitted by Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi

Co-Founder, Mizrahi Family Charitable Fund, Climate and Disability Advocate

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi and I'm honored to serve on the Maryland Commission on Climate Change, the Climate Advisory Council for the Comptroller of Maryland, and numerous nonprofit boards. In these roles, I have had the opportunity to carefully study the challenges facing our state and identify the policies that deliver the strongest return on investment for Maryland taxpayers.

In my personal capacity, I respectfully urge you to **oppose HB1023**, which would prohibit the sale, distribution, and manufacture of cultivated (lab-grown) meat in Maryland. This bill poses serious risks to public health, food safety, and climate-related health outcomes, while also limiting consumer choice and innovation.

1. Methane and greenhouse gases from livestock harm human health

Livestock production is a major source of greenhouse gases, particularly methane—a gas that is over **80 times more potent than CO₂ over 20 years** at warming the atmosphere. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, livestock contributes roughly **14.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions**, with beef and lamb being the largest contributors.

Methane contributes to climate change, which in turn worsens human health by:

- Increasing **extreme heat events**, which cause heat stress, cardiovascular problems, and respiratory issues.
- Exacerbating **air pollution**, which the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention links to asthma, heart disease, and premature death.
- Worsening **vector-borne disease patterns** by expanding the range of ticks, mosquitoes, and other disease carriers.

Reducing meat-associated methane emissions is therefore a **direct public health intervention**, not just an environmental one. Cultivated meat has the potential to

dramatically reduce methane emissions, along with land and water use, while providing the same protein and nutrients.

- Study: [Tuomisto & Teixeira de Mattos, 2011, *Environmental Science & Technology*](#) — Life-cycle assessment of cultured meat shows up to **96% lower GHG emissions** and **up to 99% lower land use** compared with conventional beef.

2. Food safety and public health advantages

Cultivated meat is produced in controlled laboratory environments, which greatly **reduces the risk of contamination from pathogens** such as *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, and *Campylobacter*, which are responsible for millions of illnesses and thousands of deaths in the U.S. every year (CDC, 2023).

People with disabilities, chronic illnesses, and compromised immune systems are disproportionately at risk. Access to safer protein sources is therefore a matter of **health equity**.

3. Antibiotic resistance and disease risk

The routine use of antibiotics in livestock contributes to the growing global threat of antibiotic-resistant infections, which the CDC and WHO identify as one of the most serious health threats of our time. Cultivated meat can be produced **without antibiotics**, reducing the risk of resistant infections.

Additionally, cultivated meat reduces the risk of **zoonotic spillover**, helping prevent future pandemics.

4. Nutrition and tailored health benefits

Cultivated meat offers **similar protein and micronutrient content** to conventional meat and could be tailored for improved fat profiles, lower saturated fat, or enhanced nutrients. (*Frontiers in Nutrition*, 2022).

This may benefit Maryland residents managing chronic health conditions, including cardiovascular disease and obesity.

5. Federal safety oversight is already in place

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and U.S. Department of Agriculture jointly approved cultivated meat products in 2023 after rigorous safety review. State bans would undermine science-based regulation and block a federally approved pathway for safe, nutritious foods.

6. Environmental health is human health

Reducing methane, CO₂, and other pollutants from livestock has clear **human health benefits**. Cleaner air and reduced greenhouse gases can decrease:

- Respiratory disease and asthma
- Cardiovascular disease
- Heat-related illness and death

Studies show that interventions to reduce livestock methane emissions, including shifting to cultivated meat, are among the most **cost-effective public health strategies** for climate-sensitive diseases. (Clark et al., *Nature Food*, 2020)

7. Economic and disability equity considerations

Maryland residents with disabilities or chronic illness face higher vulnerability to foodborne pathogens and environmental hazards. Cultivated meat offers safer, more reliable protein options while creating biotechnology jobs, strengthening the state's life sciences economy, and protecting public health.

8. Consumer freedom and innovation

HB1023 would restrict consumer choice by banning a federally reviewed, scientifically vetted product. Marylanders should have the freedom to choose foods that align with their health, ethical, and environmental values.

Conclusion

Cultivated meat is a powerful tool to **improve public health, reduce methane and greenhouse gas emissions, lower foodborne illness risk, combat antibiotic resistance, and protect vulnerable populations**.

Blocking this innovation would deny Maryland residents these clear health and environmental benefits. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to **vote NO on HB1023**.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi. Co-founder, [Mizrahi Family Charitable Fund](#)