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**Support HB 1023
Prohibition on Lab-Grown Meat**

House Health Committee

Dear Chairwoman Bagnell, Vice Chair Cullison and Health Committee Member,

Thank you for this bill to **Prohibit Lab-Grown Meat** which I support. “LAB–GROWN MEAT” or “cultivated meat” means meat or a meat product that contains animal tissue cultured from animal cells outside of the animal from which the tissue is derived. Lab-grown meat raises serious concerns for Maryland.

Environmental Concerns:

Contrary to early promises of a lower carbon foot print, recent research suggests the opposite with higher CO2 emissions and **High Energy Demand from lab grown meat** during a time of statewide energy strain:

- Operating large-scale bioreactors requires massive amounts of electricity which can be significantly higher than those of traditional beef.
- Pharmaceutical-Grade Requirements: Current production often uses highly refined “pharmaceutical-grade” growth media to prevent bacterial contamination. Producing these ingredients is resource intensive, potentially making the process up to 25 times worse for the climate than conventional beef.
- Long-Term Impact: While cows emit methane (which leaves the atmosphere relatively quickly), lab-grown meat production emits CO2, which persists for centuries, potentially causing more long term climate damage.

Health & Safety Concerns

- **Genetic Manipulation:** Some companies use genetic engineering or “immortalized” cell lines to ensure cells keep dividing. Critics raise concerns about the potential for these modified cells to have oncogenic (cancer-promoting) properties.
- **Nutritional Gaps:** Lab-grown meat lacks the complex biological processes of a living animal, which may result in a different nutritional profile—for example, it may lack certain micronutrients like heme iron or vitamin B12 unless they are manually added.
- **Contamination Risks:** Bioreactors are highly susceptible to microbial contamination. If bacteria or fungi enter the vat, they can multiply faster than the meat cells, ruining entire batches.

Economic and Ethical Costs

Production remains extremely costly and resource intensive and may rely on controversial processes with which many consumers are uncomfortable.

Several states and countries have already moved to restrict or ban lab-grown meat to protect public health and traditional agriculture. I hope Maryland will do the same and I urge your support for HB 1023. **Please keep our food REAL.**

Thank you,

Emily Tarsell