

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S *Herbal Legacy Newsletter*

June 13, 2012

Disturbing Legislation-Amanda Goodsell

I have seen some disturbing legislation during my career but Sen. Dick Durbin's new bill "Dietary Supplement Labeling Act of 2011" is a head scratcher. This bill asks for additional enforcement by the FDA on the Dietary Supplement Industry. To some that may sound like a reasonable request, but before you make up your mind as to whether or not you would support this bill let us break it down.

First and foremost we must ask ourselves why Senator Durbin would feel there is a need for this bill. In a recent legislative session Senator Durbin discussed baked goods that contain melatonin, because they are marketed as dietary supplements, these food products do not require approval by the FDA for use as additives in food. This issue is hilarious to me because the Dietary Supplement Industry is already subject to DSHEA and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP's) for Dietary Supplements. These two pieces of legislation are more strict than the Food GMP's. For example dietary supplement GMP's require that each ingredient be tested for identity. This testing ensures transparency for the customer. Food GMP's do not require identity testing. So when you purchase and ingest a food product you may or may not be eating what you think you are eating.



In addition to identity testing, Dietary Supplement companies comply with strict labeling guidelines. For example each ingredient must be listed on the label and in the order of the highest amount to the lowest amount in the product. We as consumers have a responsibility to educate ourselves and decide what we believe are appropriate foods and supplements for us to take. Apparently Senator Durbin believes that the American population is not smart enough to make basic decisions regarding their own health.

There is one thing I do agree with Senator Durbin on and that is that there are irresponsible companies marketing dangerous products that do not comply with the Dietary Supplement GMP's. These companies are the exception not the rule! We differ in our opinion as how to handle this problem. I believe that the FDA should exercise the power that they already have

and perform regular onsite audits. This is not happening in our industry. I have worked in the industry for 12 years and our company has been audited once! According to an article in the Huffington post the FDA is so understaffed it inspects less than one percent of imported food.

So in conclusion it seems pure lunacy to give the FDA more to do when they are too underfunded and understaffed to police the various industries they watch over. I believe that all Americans and for that matter all human beings should have access to dietary supplements that have the ability to enrich their lives. We live in a time where we must fight for the rights and privileges that we rightfully deserve. I personally hope that I do not live to see the day where we are told what we can and cannot eat, to me that is the day that freedom dies. I would encourage all who read this to educate themselves before the next elections and support those like Senator Orin Hatch who have fought for the natural product industry on these issues.

Amanda Goodsell is Director of Operations at Wholistic Botanicals LLC.