



Senator Richard Durbin
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Judd Gregg
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

September 8, 2010

Dear Senators Durbin and Gregg,

Trust for America's Health (TFAH), a nonprofit, nonpartisan public health advocacy organization, would like to express our strong support for immediate Senate passage of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (S. 510). Although every American depends on the safety of the food they serve to their families, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) lacks the tools to ensure that safety. S. 510 would finally help bring the FDA into the 21st century.

Approximately 76 million Americans - one in four - are sickened by foodborne disease each year. Of these, an estimated 325,000 are hospitalized and 5,000 die. A recent study by Ohio State University found that foodborne illnesses cost the U.S. economy an estimated \$152 billion annually. With multiple severe food outbreaks in recent years, it is urgent that the Senate take this step to keep Americans safe.

The FDA Food Safety Modernization Act would place more emphasis on prevention of food borne illness and give the FDA new authorities to address food safety problems. Under this legislation, food processors would be required to identify potential hazards in their production processes and implement preventive programs to eliminate those hazards. Additionally, the bill would require FDA to inspect all food facilities more frequently and give FDA mandatory recall authority of contaminated food. S. 510 is a bipartisan bill, with widespread support from industry, consumer groups, and public health organizations. The bill passed the Senate HELP Committee with a unanimous voice vote, and food safety legislation passed the House last year with overwhelming bipartisan support.

We thank you for your strong leadership on this legislation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact TFAH's Government Relations Manager, Dara Alpert Lieberman, at (202) 223-9870, ext. 20, or dliberman@tfah.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey Levi".

Jeffrey Levi, Ph.D
Executive Director

CC: Majority Leader Harry Reid
Minority Leader Mitch McConnell
Senator Christopher Dodd
Senator Mike Enzi
Senator Richard Burr