

Thank you chairman, for allowing me this opportunity to comment.

On behalf of my family I request that this committee reject Regulation #2777. My name is Carrie Hahn. I have been married 15 years and have two children, ages 11 and 13 – both are straight A students. Last year my family moved from an affluent suburb of Pittsburgh, to a farm about an hour north. I am an on-line retailer and work from home. My husband is an executive for a large national trucking company. We are intelligent, discriminating consumers who drink raw milk and we do not need protection from my farmer-neighbor, local market or store.

We became raw milk drinkers 8 years ago after our youngest daughter had a reaction to a vaccine. Her pediatrician could not offer any assistance in eliminating the side effects she suffered, so we turned to alternative medicine. For several years homeopathy helped to detoxify poisons from her body and most of her more serious problems were resolved. However, it was not until we introduced raw milk to her diet that she recovered completely. The changes were profound and almost immediate.

Additionally, our oldest daughter had fewer digestive issues and suffered less from constipation, recurrent ear infections and chronic yeast infections. My husband and I suffered less and less with seasonal allergies. I have no doubt that the beneficial bacteria and enzymes found in raw milk have helped all of us by repairing our digestive tracts.

Because of raw milk, I have developed a closer relationship to my local food system. Although raw milk sales are legal in Pennsylvania, eight years ago I had to go to great lengths to obtain raw milk as there were no certified raw dairies within an hour of my house. Fortunately, the demand for raw milk has increased so much that several other dairies in the area are now licensed by the PDA.

Humans have survived for thousands of years on raw milk; way before we even had refrigeration, but the raw milk "movement" began about the same time that pasteurization was implemented. You can find a wonderful, well researched history of raw milk and the science of pasteurization in the book "The Untold Story of Milk." It wasn't until reading this book that I could comfortably serve raw milk to my family, after all, I, like so many others, have been told that raw milk is dangerous.

Because of raw milk, I have a greater understanding of the challenges that small independent farmers face and not just those who produce the raw milk that I am so passionate about. I am now an activist who watches legislation at the state and federal level, which might jeopardize my right to purchase pure and wholesome foods on which my family depends. There is a food revolution going on in this country and consumers are waking up. They are tired of the revolving door at our government agencies, where individuals move effortlessly from the private sector, into government positions and back to the private sector. We are tired of learning that our elected officials continue to bury legislation deep within completely unrelated bills. And we are REALLY tired of government officials who try to quickly push regulations through without fully notifying those individuals that would be most greatly impacted.

In October of 2009, this committee requested that the PDA clarify numerous items in the draft proposal of this legislation. Having read both the draft and final guidelines, it would appear that many of your requests have not been fulfilled. Respectfully, I trust that this committee would again seek clarification, particularly in regard to pathogen testing and protocol, the increased costs producers would bear to perform these tests and a realistic construction cost analysis of a bottling facility and bottling equipment as required.

I hope that this committee would ask the PDA for scientifically conducted and published reports that specifically show that mechanical capping containers of fresh raw milk reduces public health risks. There may be studies which prove mechanically capping milk that has been homogenized and pasteurized is important, because we know that once homogenized and/or pasteurized, milk becomes extremely susceptible to the growth of pathogens from post-processing contamination. However, to my knowledge, there are no objective studies using raw milk, that is, fresh whole milk processed for immediate human consumption in its unprocessed form, which show a reduction in public health risk from mechanical capping. Please remember that raw milk produced for human consumption is an entirely different product than the raw milk that is produced specifically for pasteurization.

Finally, because of raw milk, I am here before you, ready to do whatever it takes to defend my right to purchase raw milk and to defend my constitutional right to make purchases directly from farmers. We, the people, are your best regulators.