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September 1, 2009

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing quite concerned about the PA state government making changes to milk regulations. I do not even live in the state of PA, but I am still concerned.

With the issue of raw milk, the government has become far over-reaching and dictatorial and has really crossed the line, taking away freedoms from the American people. I speak as one in MD who can not even buy raw milk because "it is so dangerous," and yet I have yet to see the documented proof of that. If I am mistaken, please do send me the research that shows the many illnesses and deaths that result from raw milk. I can buy cigarettes, alcohol, guns...but I can't buy raw milk. It really is quite laughable when you think about it. How ridiculous!

First, I believe that direct transactions from the milk producer to the consumer should be exempt from regulations. If I want to buy raw milk, I should be able to buy raw milk. I, as the consumer, am willing to take on the 'risk.' I can buy as much alcohol as I want and even become an alcoholic (even though we know that will eventually kill you). I should have the right to buy raw milk and become...well, healthier! And, direct transactions between a producer and a consumer are private in nature (should NOT be regulated!) and such transactions do not affect the health or safety of "the public."

Second, we all know that people from neighboring states come into PA to buy raw milk. This movement is ever growing in popularity. Make raw milk difficult to obtain in PA, and you will hurt your state economy and limit incoming money.

Third, a dairy farmer and a local consumer will develop a relationship. If I was purchasing raw milk from a farmer, I would want to know what his farm is like—is it clean, does he care for the animals, do they graze green pastures? If it was filthy, I would never buy milk from him. And trust me, if I got sick, I wouldn't purchase from him again! And I'd tell all my friends not to. A local farmer who knows his customers will definitely have a higher intrinsic accountability than anyone mass producing. And states that do allow unlicensed sale of raw milk directly from the farmer to consumer (Missouri, Nebraska) have a good track record for food safety.

Fourth, a small dairy farmer—should an outbreak ever occur—will only end up affecting a small group of people. Mass produced dairy...we all know what will happen (and has happened in the past). Just remember that massive peanut recall! Mass produced products are the ones who need to be regulated—their impact rapidly reaches far and wide and thus is much more dangerous!

Fifth, testing for "pathogens" really must be defined as testing for "pathogens that cause human illness." There are multitudes of healthy bacteria, and many bacteria are called pathogens. Specification is so important!

Thank you for reading my letter. I hope you truly care for the small dairy farmers and for the American public. Please do not "protect" your people from something they do not want to be "protected" from. You would be stifling their freedom by imposing unnecessary laws.

Christy Greer

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
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