



To Whom It May Concern, I am writing this letter to express my endorsement of the Citizen Petition initiated by Jax Bari, which urges the FDA to require all packaged foods in the United States to label Gluten as a Major Food Allergen. This initiative, aligning with the objectives of the "White House Challenge to End Hunger and Build Healthy Communities, is not praiseworthy but fundamentally crucial for the millions of Americans who live with Celiac Disease.

As someone who comprehends the difficulties faced by individuals with Celiac Disease, I find it deeply concerning that there is currently no requirement for labeling. The fact that people with Celiac Disease have to navigate through a food landscape without adequate information is simply unacceptable. The potential health risks they face, ranging from anemia to conditions like cancer and heart disease, emphasize the pressing need for change. The disparity between 87 countries where gluten must be declared on food labels and its absence in labeling regulations within the United States is an apparent discrepancy that demands attention.

This issue goes beyond creating competition; it pertains directly to ensuring the safety and well-being of a portion of our population. The existing labeling system needs to be improved. Often puts people with Celiac Disease in a risky situation when it comes to their health. Furthermore, individuals with Celiac Disease bear an economic burden and healthcare costs. Making sure that products containing gluten are clearly labeled would be a step towards reducing these costs and improving the lives of millions of people. I am particularly impressed

by the research and support this petition has garnered, including from organizations and experts in the field.

The FAO/WHO Expert Consultation findings, which included Dr. Lauren Jackson from the FDA, endorse including gluten as an allergen. It's time for the FDA to align its policies with these recommendations and international standards. By recognizing gluten as a food allergen in labeling, the FDA will not only fulfill its responsibility to protect consumers but also take an essential stride toward meeting all Americans' nutritional and health needs, as highlighted. The White House Conference changes are not merely a regulation adjustment; it's a measure to prevent adverse health effects and enhance the quality of life for individuals with Celiac Disease. In conclusion, I strongly urge the FDA to address this petition. The well-being and protection of Americans rely on it. I appreciate your consideration of my remarks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'th sil', is positioned above the typed name and contact information.

Thomas Silvera, MSHS-PH
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