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Monsanto Co.
2111 Pi'ilani Hwy.
Kihei, HI. 96753

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
City Council
January 9, 2013
10:00 AM

Resolution 12-319
"Hawaii State Association of Counties legislative package"

Chair and Committee members:

My name is Brian Ferreira, Research Associate in charge of Land Prep for Maui Monsanto Hawaii.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on Resolution 12-319. I understand that there has been a last minute effort to add to the HSAC legislative package urging the State of Hawaii to require labeling of Genetically Engineered Food. I oppose the addition of this specific proposal to this Resolution for the following reasons.

The FDA has determined that where genetically-modified crops don't differ from non-GM crops, that products containing them do not have to be labeled. FDA does require the product to be labeled if the ingredient is a potential allergen, or somehow changes the nutritional properties of the food. To date, no approved biotech crop is either an allergen, or has significant nutritional differences from non-GM counterparts.

Requiring labeling for ingredients that do not pose a health issue would undermine both our labeling laws and our consumer confidence.

Individuals who make a personal decision not to consume food containing GM ingredients can easily avoid such products. In the U.S., they can purchase products that are certified as organic under the National Organic Program. They can also buy products which companies have voluntarily labeled as not containing GM ingredients. The law allows for voluntary labeling so long as the information is accurate, truthful and avoids misleading consumers about the food.

In addition, I am concerned that this specific item was not listed on today's agenda and thus not given adequate notice to comment on this topic.

I respectfully ask that you reject adding this item to the HSAC legislative package resolution.

Sincerely,

Brian Ferreira