

3251

2015-2016 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

January 22, 2015

Introduced by M. of A. TITUS -- read once and referred to the Committee
on Health

AN ACT to create a special task force to investigate the impact of
consuming genetically modified organisms

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEM-
BLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "genetically modified organism act of 2015."

3 S 2. Legislative intent. The legislature takes notice of the growing
4 number of consumers, worldwide, who are concerned with the use of genet-
5 ically modified organisms in our food supply, especially food and infant
6 formula manufactured for children.

7 Genetically modified foods are a by product of the compounding of
8 plant and animal DNA to create a product which fosters a greater gross
9 product for manufacturing. Medical experts have cited genetically modi-
10 fied foods as a key inducer of chronic food allergies and antibody immu-
11 nity. Genetically modified organisms have also been shown to foster
12 developmental delays in children who consume products containing such
13 organisms.

14 Despite these concerns, there is a shortage of information regarding
15 the true impact, on our health, of consuming foods which contain genet-
16 ically modified organisms. The quality and safety of the foods that we
17 consume, especially food and infant formula manufactured for children,
18 depend on clear and conspicuous labeling so the impact of genetically
19 modified organisms on our health can be effectively monitored.

20 The impact of using genetically modified organisms in our food supply
21 warrants further research and analysis. The creation of a special task
22 force to investigate the full effects, both harmful and beneficial, of
23 the use of genetically modified organisms will help protect some of our
24 most vulnerable citizens of this state, the children.

EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

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1 S 3. Definitions. As used in this act, the following terms shall have
2 the following meanings:

3 (a) "Food" means (i) articles used for food or drink for humans or
4 other animals, (ii) chewing gum, (iii) infant formula, and (iv) articles
5 used for components of any such article.

6 (b) "Genetically modified organism (GMO)" means an organism whose
7 genetic characteristics have been altered by the insertion of a modified
8 gene or a gene from another organism using the techniques of genetic
9 engineering.

10 (c) "Genetic engineering" means a process by which a food or food
11 ingredient that is produced from an organism or organisms in which the
12 genetic material has been changed through the application of: (i) in
13 vitro nucleic acid techniques, including recombinant DNA techniques and
14 the direct injection of nucleic acid into cells or organelles; or (ii)
15 fusion of cells, including protoplast fusion, or hybridization tech-
16 niques that overcome natural physiological, reproductive or recombina-
17 tion barriers, where the donor cells or protoplasts do not fall within
18 the same taxonomic group, in a way that does not occur by natural multi-
19 plication or natural recombination.

20 (d) "Infant formula" means a milk-based or soy-based powder, concen-
21 trated liquid or ready-to-feed substitute for human breast milk that is
22 intended for infant consumption and is commercially available.

23 S 4. Genetically modified organism task force. (a) There is hereby
24 created the genetically modified organism task force administered by the
25 department of health. The task force shall be chaired by the commission-
26 er of health. The chair may appoint other state administrative agencies
27 which may prove beneficial to the work of the task force as ad hoc
28 members. The chair may also appoint individuals and representatives of
29 organizations other than state administrative agencies to an advisory
30 committee to advise on any aspect of its functions, powers, and duties.
31 The governor, the temporary president of the senate and the speaker of
32 the assembly shall each appoint a liaison to the genetically modified
33 organism task force.

34 (b) The task force shall:

35 (i) monitor the effects of genetic engineering and the use of genet-
36 ically modified organisms in our food supply, including infant formula;
37 and

38 (ii) identify and recommend means to improve the quality of the foods
39 we consume.

40 S 5. Report. The genetically modified organism task force shall, with-
41 in eighteen months of its implementation, report to the governor and the
42 legislature its findings and recommendations. Such report shall be bound
43 and made available to the public.

44 S 6. This act shall take effect immediately.