

# Info Alert

## National Conference of State Legislatures Office of State-Federal Relations

April 9, 2014

### Federal GMO Labeling Bill Introduced in U.S. House

U.S. Representatives Mike Pompeo (R-Kan.) and G.K. Butterfield (D-N.C.) have introduced legislation that would create a voluntary federal framework for the labeling of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The legislation would **prohibit state governments** from enacting laws that would require labeling of foods that contain GMOs.

Specifically, the [Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act](#) would require companies to submit new products containing GMOs to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for examination to determine if a label is needed on the product. GMO labeling would only be required if the FDA determines “there is evidence of adulteration, food safety or mislabeling”. The bill would allow companies to label products as “non-GMO” if they so choose.

As of now, FDA’s official position is that current science does not warrant labeling such foods as “GMO products” and that the foods and ingredients are “substantially equivalent” to conventionally produced foods.

Because the legislation would create a federal label if the FDA determines one is needed, any state law related to GMO labels would be pre-empted. Additionally, state ballot initiatives to require labeling would be prohibited.

The Coalition for Safe Affordable Foods, comprised of food industry groups and farm associations, has been vocal on its stance that a patchwork of state laws related to GMO labeling has created uncertainty and confusion in the industry.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee is expected to hold a hearing on the bill sometime in June or July.

NCSL’s Agriculture Task Force will be discussing GMO labeling at its next meeting during NCSL’s Legislative Summit August 19-22 in Minneapolis, Minn., and plans to focus on the issue as part of its 2014-2015 agenda.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the announcement or would like to be more involved with NCSL’s Agriculture Task Force please do not hesitate to contact NCSL staff [Ben Husch](#) (202-624-7779) or [Melanie Condon](#) (202-624-3597).