

August 2, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
S-230, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Reid and McConnell and Representatives Boehner and Pelosi:

We are deeply concerned about recent action in the U.S. House of Representatives to amend H.R. 2112, the Fiscal Year 2012 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, to prohibit the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) from spending appropriated funds to finalize its review of an application for genetically enhanced Atlantic salmon.

We do not write to support or oppose this specific application, but rather to register our concern with the House's action, which if allowed to become law, would disrupt the FDA's Congressional mandate to base its assessments of human and animal drugs, devices, vaccines, and process applications on the best-available science underlying an application. Such a disruption would diminish the credibility of the FDA approval process at home and overseas. The global reputation of FDA's science-based review procedure is based on the Agency's objectivity.

At a June 23, 2011, hearing to examine the benefits of agricultural biotechnology held by the House Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on Rural Development, Research, Biotechnology, and Foreign Agriculture, esteemed global hunger expert Dr. Calestous Juma, who currently serves on the staff of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, testified as follows regarding his concern about the House's recent action on genetically enhanced Atlantic salmon:

"I understand this House passed an amendment to the Agriculture Appropriations Bill that would effectively prevent the Food and Drug Administration from completing its safety assessment of the first food fish that makes use of (bio)technology. . . It is not this particular fish that is at stake. It is the principle behind the amendment and its wider ramifications. It sends the message to the rest of the world that the science-based

regulatory oversight as embodied in the FDA review process is subject to political intervention. Furthermore, it signals to the world that the United States may cede its leadership position in the agricultural use of biotechnology. . . I believe it is imperative that the United States stay the course it has set in not letting politics interfere with its science-based regulatory system that is truly the envy of the world.”

We share Dr. Juma’s views and strongly urge you to reject the House-passed provision. Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Members of the Animal Agriculture Coalition

Including:

American Association of Bovine Practitioners
American Association of Swine Veterinarians
American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Feed Industry Association
American Horse Council
American Meat Institute
American Rabbit Breeders Association
American Sheep Industry Association
American Society of Animal Science
American Veal Association
American Veterinary Medical Association
Animal Agriculture Alliance
Animal Health Institute
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
Association of Veterinary Biologics Companies
Biotechnology Industry Organization
Catfish Farmers of America
Council for Agricultural Science and Technology
Federation of Animal Science Societies
Holstein Association USA, Inc.
Livestock Exporters Association of the USA
Livestock Marketing Association
National Aquaculture Association
National Association of Federal Veterinarians
National Cattlemen’s Beef Association
National Chicken Council
National Dairy Herd Improvement Association
National Farmers Union

National Grain and Feed Association
National Institute for Animal Agriculture
National Pork Producers Council
National Renderers Association
National Turkey Federation
North American Elk Breeders Association
United Egg Producers
U.S. Animal Health Association
U.S. Poultry & Egg Producers Association

cc: The Honorable Daniel Inouye
The Honorable Hal Rogers
The Honorable Tom Harkin
The Honorable Fred Upton
The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
The Honorable Frank Lucas