Your Name: Aditya Desai

Group Members: Karen Kim, Isaac Lewis, John Soroka and Aditya Desai

Committee Name (from Supplemental Packet): Committee of the Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

**Part 1: Research**

Before a committee of Congress persons presents their bill to the House of Representatives and Senate, they must be well informed about their topic. This requires research. The format attached will allow you to gather your information and present it in an orderly manner.

* Each congressperson is responsible for completing this research packet. There are 8 pages, make sure you complete the ENTIRE packet.
* You must cite all your work!
* At the end you will attach a formal bibliography.
* See individual rubrics for grade point requirements**.**
* This packet should be used as a rough draft of your work and your final product must be submitted in a typed format

**Part I:** **Topic Overview**  AS A GROUP

1. Name and explain your topic

Our topic is about GMO’s (genetically modified organisms). A food is made a GMO when it’s genetic makeup is changed or made unnaturally. People can do this by taking genetic material from a plant, and/or animal, and combining it with some other genetic material from a plant, and/or animal. This process of gene splicing is used to create foods with desired traits, such as flavor, and size. So the question is, what is the problem with using GMO’s? Well you would be surprised at all of the answers.

Although most labels on foods today will state that it’s “GMO Free!” through testing, we will find that the foods in fact contain traces of GMO. This is because of the pollen from GMO, such as corn, will spread to the organic foods. But rather than the lawsuits that are being placed on the owners of the GMO farm, what’s more important, is how the consumers are putting their lives at risk. Most people are allergic to foods that contain GMO, and if they consume GMO they will face severe consequences. (5)

Not knowing what’s in what we eat is a terrifying thought, however it is benefiting some companies. Large companies such as Coca Cola and Heinz use GMO, but don’t label the processes their products went through. This can be fixed by setting a law that states these companies absolutely must put a label on their stocks, stating how their produce was made, but then these companies will probably loose the majority of their consumers. Thus the company’s profit plummets, which is a huge problem for the CEO’s. Nevertheless, this is a crisis for the many factory workers that works at these companies, because it is their income on the line. With out the company, the workers will go unemployed.(5)

1. Why does this topic interest you?

This topic interests us due to the fact that we are all consumers of these foods on a daily basis. As of right now, GMO’s don’t require labels on their products to include the content in the food as well as how it was prepared. GMO’s include everyday items such as corn, soy, canola, zucchini, squash, milk and other products that are genetically modified. In other words, we ingest these foods despite knowing what ingredients were used to compose it, how it was generated, how thoroughly the FDA has checked it or whether our food contains harmful growth hormones, anti-biotics or any other substance used to grow these GMO’s. In addition, GMO’s are also a very compelling topic due to thefact that sufficient testing has not yet been conducted to determine whether these products are safe for human consummation therefore leaving us at risk if we deplete it. Not only is it sabotaging human lives, it is also causing damage to the environment as well as animals. (4)

Ultimately, genetically modified product regulations administered by Congress is a very important and intriguing issue due to the vast number of citizens suffering from this annually (concealed ingredients, processes etc.), as well as the atrocious environment conditions we need to sustain because of this crisis. Food is vital to survival, so maintaining its safety is of our utmost importance. One day, this can effect us as well, and until we do something about it, we will not be safe from these appalling foods which can create unknown allergic reactions etc! Perhaps, it is indeed the time to make a modification to ensure that all of the food we as well as the other 318 million Americans consume is intact. (2)

1. What do you think are the current controversies surrounding your topic?

Some of the current controversies surrounding GMO’s right now are health problems, environmental concerns, access issues and ethical questions. (1)

The health problems associated with GMO’s is a huge quarrel today due to our woefully inadequate data bases. Today, GMO’s have deeply infiltrated the U.S. food supply, raising many questions as to whether or not they are safe for human consummation. Experts generally consider the U.S. Food Supply to be one of the safest in the world, however the accelerating amounts of unknown hormones, anti-biotics and pesticides in everyday products (soy, corn etc.) have led customers to watch their step before picking these items from the aisles. Supporters who claim GMO’s do cause health problems state the regulatory role of the government is to help the people of its nation, and requiring food agencies to set certain, strict administrative polices such as including labels to exhibit what ingredients and processes were used to make that food is what they should indeed do. This can be detrimental to consumers since after all they do not know how their product was prepared, or what ingredients (anti-biotics, chemicals etc.) were used. Others who believe GMO’s are exceptional and are not related to health problems claim people are overreacting to these occasional outbreaks and increasing GMO constraints will just cause more harm to the U.S. The U.S. is a free country and having the government regulate what we should and shouldn’t eat is wrong, they say. In addition, if we increase the requirements, employees will have to check more thoroughly, and apply labels which would cost the U.S. an additional amount of money (economy). (2)

Another controversy surrounding our topic are environmental concerns due to the unknown long term effects on the environment. Within this controversy, supporters who believe environmental concerns are an effect of GMO’s argue, unknown chemicals used to grow GMO’s can spread to other organic crops. In addition, GM crops can pass their genes to other weeds and more. For an example, a GM crop bred for pest resistance pass those genes onto the weeds in the ground therefore making them tenuous to herbicides (more weed killer needs to be applied). On the contrary, some other citizens argue that the population of the world is increasing which means there will be less land for farming. GMO’s will help produce greater yields of crops at an overall lower price. (1)

Furthermore, another controversy surrounding modern day food safety in terms of GMO’s are the access issues. This is due to the fact that testing GM crops cost millions of dollars and require a patent. Over the years, fewer and fewer companies have applied for a patent therefore showing evidence of how hard it is to establish these products. (1)

One last debate surrounding GMO’s today are ethnic issues which concerns mixing genes of different animals and whether this is injustice to them. Moreover, since the United States has no mandatory labeling for GM ingredients, this may interfere with one’s ethnic and religious beliefs due to the fact that they don’t know the processes used to make that product therefore do not know whether they can stay in line with their racial (ethnic) beliefs. (1)

Ultimately, many controversies have appeared concerning GMO’s over the years, all of which are provide substantial points as to why we should bolster or abridge GMO restraints. (1)

**Part II: Preliminary Research** AS A GROUP

*You must use the Media Center Model Congress Pathfinder to look for research based on your topic. Use sources such as Ebsco Host Points of View, Issues and Controversies, Gail: Opposing View Points to help start your research*

1. What is the history/origin of your topic?

GMO’s have an extensive history and origin filled with many landmark decisions, discoveries as well as legal implications. For starters, our topic first originated when the first GMO patent (a government licence conferring the right to create a GMO) was issued in 1980 following the Supreme Court case *Diamond v. Chakrabarty* which allowed Exxon to create oil-eating microorganisms. Following that, in 1982, the FDA approved the first ever GMO (humulin and insulin in bacteria). In the next decade (1994), GMO’s finally hit the grocery stores with Flavr Savr Tomato (genetically modified to have a longer shelf life) the first to enter the aisles. Two years later, in 1996, scientists in Australia genetically modified weeds to be resistant to glyphosphate, a herbicide. In addition, the next year (1997) perhaps one of the most significant things in the history of GMO’s took place. The European Union, now will require these products to have mandatory labels, unlike the U.S. Throughout the next few decades, GMO’s have evolved to dominate organic food crops. Over the years, more than 100 acres worldwide have been planted with genetically modified seeds with our marketplace embracing GMO technology at a distressing rate. (6)

1. What are the issues/problems regarding your topic?

Currently, there are many issues and problems regarding GMO’s. Some of the major issues include health problems, contamination, environmental concerns, legal implications, increased suicide rates, ethical questions and biodiversity. Health problems are involved in a huge debate today due to our woefully inadequate databases. This is due to the fact that enough satisfactory research has not yet been conducted to determine whether GM crops or organisms are safe for human consumption. Another issue surrounding GMO’s is contamination. This is proved to be one of the biggest issues because GMO seeds are very tough to contain since seeds can navigate much further than they are originally apprehended to. This can cause cross pollination on farms with organic crops (crops that don’t wish to be GMO). One more problem associated with GMO’s are environmental concerns since there can be unknown long term effects on the environment. For an instance, a GM crop bred for pest defiance passes those genes onto the weeds in the ground therefore making them for tenuous to herbicides (more weed killer needs to be applied = harms to the environment). Moreover, another complication involved with GMO’s are legal implications because farmers require patents to plant as well as grow these crops. These crops also take millions of dollars to test therefore making it very rare. In addition, GMO’s have also increased suicide rates since the extremely high prices of GM seeds and pesticides are causing farmers that grow these crops to loose more money than ever. This can cause many to commit suicide, in fact, over the past few years, about 1,000 people per month are taking their lives due to GMO’s. Lastly, GMO’s have also raised questions toward biodiversity. Scientists have recently discovered that growing these crops reduce biodiversity significantly because it requires land to be cleared of all of its native plants to then grow a single crop, instead (less biodiversity). Ultimately, GMO’s have raised many issues and problems leaving its path to overtake the world food supply (instead of organic crops) unknown. (1)

**Part III: Narrow your Focus**

1. As a group, which specific issue/problem will you focus on?

As a group, the specific issue/problem we will be focusing on is the **Labeling of GMO’s**. As of

right now, the U.S. does not require GM crops and organisms to include labels that exhibit what ingredients and processes were used to make that product. Over the years, this issue has been colossally becoming more serious due to the damages faced by the consumers as a result of these concealed processes. This is harmful because labeling is a consumer “right to know” such as what was used to make the product as well as how it was made. By disclosing this information, it would harmful to consumers since they wouldn’t be able to stay in line with their ethics as well as food and scientific safety. Ultimately, this will negatively impact one’s social, cultural and ethical values. (1)

1. Create a Preamble for that issue/problem (Write the solution to the problem.)

Whereas all Genetically Modified Foods in the U.S. must encompass a label which embraces the constituents as well as the techniques used to form that product to permit citizens to stay in line with their ethics and food/scientific welfare. (1) For when an organic industry finds any traces of Genetically Modification in their produce, thou will be required to encompass a label, however, subsequently will be obliged to an investigation. (1)

**Part IV: Supportive Evidence** EVERY GROUP MEMBER MUST CONTRIBUTE 2 MINIMUM

*Types of evidence could include the following: ~Courts Cases, ~Previous, existing, and/or pending Legislation, ~Statistics #’s (studies, polls/surveys, and research results), ~current events, ~Constitutional Connection (Preamble, 5 Basic Principles, and Amendments)*

1. *Research your case.*
2. *Each time you find a statistic or a relevant piece of information, add it to the chart and categorize it.*
3. *To find legislation, use Thomas.gov*
4. *To find current events, use EBSCOhost or Google News search.*
5. *To find court cases, use Oyez.org*

**Requirement: You MUST include several Statistics and Constitutional Connection (amendments)**

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| **Type of Evidence** | **Supportive Information-Facts** | **Significance-Relevant to your topic** | **Citation** *(use EasyBib--add source as you go)* |
| Pending  Legislation | Vermont Act 120: The country’s 3rd mandatory labeling law for GMO’s which will require (by July, 2016) that all genetically modified foods and beverages sold in the state contain a label revealing the ingredients and polices used to make that product. | This has a vital relation to GMO’s because it is a state legislation which requires GMO’s to indeed be labeled. Over the years, the U.S. has not required products which are genetically modified to embrace labels telling the consumer the constituents and processes used to make that product. However, this Vermont State Bill has mandated labeling to GMO’s. This large step paves the way for other states, in the future to adopt this policy and hopefully someday the U.S. itself. | "What You Need to Know About GMO Labeling." *Consumer Reports*. Web. 22 Feb. 2016.  "Vermont Lawsuit a Test Case for GMO-Labeling Laws and the First Amendment." *The Heritage Foundation*. Web. 22 Feb. 2016. |
| Statistics (Study) | Anti-GMO campaigner, Jeffery Smith, has conducted dozens of experiments/studies in which animals fed GMO’s faced abnormal health conditions. For an example, in one of his experiments, pigs fed GMO products turned sterile or had false pregnancies. In support of this information, Gilles-Eric Séralini conducted a GM corn study in which rats feed genetically engineered corn developed unusual illnesses including cancer ultimately resulting in early death. | These studies have a symbolic connection in correspondence with GMO’s and their labeling policies due to the fact that it proves how adverse GMO products actually are. The studies validated the harmful effect of GMO’s such as false pregnancies, cancer and even early death. Not only do these studies show us the harmful effects of GMO’s on a human body (prevents us for eating it), it pushes the movement for labeling GMO’s forward. This is due to the fact that our bill is to administer labeling of genetically modified products to help consumers stay in line with their ethics. This research shows, the negative effects these products can have on consumers, therefore labels need to be authorized before we, as consumers start experiencing these pessimistic outcomes. | "Jeffrey Smith on the End of Genetically Engineered Foods." *Jeffrey Smith on the End of Genetically Engineered Foods*. Web. 27 Feb. 2016. |
| Current Event | Right now the GMA ( Grocery Manufacturers Association) are being charged in a 14 million dollar lawsuit for allegedly creating a plan to fund multimillion companies in order to eliminate the GMO labeling initiative. In the article, it shows that this accusation all began in the year 2013, when Attorney Bob Ferguson for Washington, stated that the GMA had illegally covered the names of their donors to a campaign to erase state initiative 522: “have required food labels for genetically modified ingredients” But now, the article revealed that on February 14, 2016 documents were released, showing the exact plans the GMA had schemed, titled “ No on 522”. What’s more important, are the names of the donors. Companies such as PepsiCo, Nestlé USA General Mills, and Coca-Cola had all been on the naming list for companies that had been supported. Now these companies and the GMA are in dangerous, waters, because they must be hiding something from the public, if they were willing to spend 14 million dollars to eliminate the initiative. So the GMA let out information late last year about this new “SmartLabel” which will show all the ingredients, allergens, animal welfare, environmental policies, and whether the food contains genetically modified organisms (GMOs). | This article goes to show the shady actions of the companies we rely on for everyday food. The GMA kept the names of their donors from the public for such a long time, and it did indeed violate our right to the press. Now that these company names have been released to the public, it raises the votes for GMO labeling. This incident impacted the consumers, making them realize that they don’t exactly know what is going into their mouths. Furthermore, the companies supporting the “No On 522” plan, are all shady as well. The major question is, why would these multi million associations go take the risk of being funded by the GMA? Of course GMO’s had to have played a major part in this situation, but it’s more than that. All these companies want to stay away from releasing labels on their products, because they value their money. They want to keep their customers or otherwise, they will go bankrupt. The only way to keep their clients, is to never put labels on their products. To never let people know how they make their foods, and how GMO’s are handled. | Haspel, Tamar. "Big Food Accused of 'Elaborate Scheme' to Kill GMO Labeling Effort." *Fortune Big Food Accused of Elaborate Scheme to Kill GMO Labeling Effort Comments*. Fortune, 21 Feb. 2016. Web. 22 Feb. 2016. <<http://fortune.com/2016/02/21/big-food-gmo-labeling-lawsuit/>>. |
| Constitutional Connection | GMO labeling relates to the Constitution in many ways. For starters, the preamble to the Constitution states, “...promote the general welfare…” This quotes shows that one of the goals of the U.S. is to contribute to the well being of its citizens. Similarly, by having the nation adopt our mandatory labeling bill, the U.S. will fulfill one of its goals in the constitution by forcing all agricultural companies to notify their consumers as to what genetically modified ingredients were put into that product. | This has a requisite correspondence with our bill due to the fact that it supports it, showing that one of the goal’s of the U.S. (and Constitution) is to “promote the general welfare,” therefore should notify consumers as to what genetically modified components were used to produce that food. This fulfills the U.S.’s obligation to protect its citizens by allowing consumers to know what they are putting into their bodies, ultimately allowing them to stay in line with their ethics as well as food and science welfare. | "Preamble." *LII / Legal Information Institute*. Web. 23 Feb. 2016. |
| Statistics (Poll/Survey) | Recently, a poll was conducted by ABC, asking consumers of what they thought about GM crops and foods. The ultimate results showed skepticism toward these foods. In the poll, barely more than a ⅓ of the voters said GMO’s were safe to eat while 52% stated that they weren’t (remaining were undecided). Moreover, 93% of the consumers that voted even stated that the federal government should require labels on foods saying whether that item has been genetically modified. Furthermore, the survey even showed that 57% of consumers would be less likely of buying foods that are labeled genetically modified. | This survey has a vitally important connection to GMO’s and labeling them due to the fact that it showed skepticism toward these foods. This paves the way for GMO’s to contain a label in the future and possibly be eliminated from our diet. Additionally, the survey showed that most consumers were against GMO’s and especially against them not embracing a label. In the future, as to our preamble, the U.S. may indeed inherit a bill stating that these products should be labeled. In addition even if they were labeled, voters still said they would prefer not to buy that food, therefore showing that Monsanto and other GMO producing agricultural companies will face a major loss if this bill is passed. Ultimately, the poll showed how consumers feel very insecure about GMO products, supporting of why the U.S. should adopt a labeling policy. | *ABC News*. ABC News Network. Web. 22 Feb. 2016. |
| Statistics | This article mainly focuses on the argument of how labeling our GMO products is a right to every customer. In fact it stated that GMO labeling is not as expensive as the public sees it to be. As of 2002, Europe had all of its companies label everyone of their GMO product, and there has been no drastic change in food sales nor stock prices. Further on, the article mentions that if each consumer pays $2.30 PER YEAR then labeling would not be a problem for any of the companies. In fact as of January Campbell Soup Co. announced it would label all its products nationally to comply with the Vermont law, without any price increases. Now their stock price is still on the rise, and no drastic changes are apparent. | All fear of stock market crashes, and sales decreasing are gone. Many companies have put labels on their foods all over the world and many of them are still very successful, so there isn’t really any life threatening risk of labeling products. | Bell, Chuck. "Letter: Support GMO Labeling." *Lohud.com*. The Journal News, 16 Feb. 2016. Web. 22 Feb. 2016. <<http://www.lohud.com/story/opinion/readers/2016/02/16/support-gmo-labeling/80227184/>>. |

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| Current Event | According to The New York Times, the food company Campbell’s are beginning to list their GM ingredients in their products. Starting with one of their more known foods, SpaghettiO’s, the company decided to simply caution a small warning to note consumers that said, partially produced with genetic engineering. Other companies have also said, for more information about GM ingredients, visit Whatsinmyfood.com, not mentioning any actual GM ingredients or health hazards. However, Campbell's was the first out of their competition to make this change, but they hope that this will encourage other food companies to follow suit. This new proposal is predicted to take approximately 12-18 months to go into full effect; However, some critics go against the newly wed idea. They say that this will cause major money loss in the food business and a huge downfall for consumers, since they will lose interest and gain fear once they realize the product was G.M.O. tested. Instead, they wish for an overall governmental ruling that guarantees safety and assures that it is OK to consume. | The current event that is found in the article, “Campbell’s Labels Will Disclose G.M.O. Ingredients” is significant to our topic. One way its related is because this is the first food industry to begin labeling their products with G.M.O. facts and warnings. Since our topic focuses on GMO food labeling, it is important to realize that food companies like Campbell’s have already started marking their products, taking a step ahead of their competition. With hope and confidence, more companies can, “follow the leader” and can make their contribution to the growing amount of companies that are making the big decision on whether adding GMO labels to their product or excluding them altogether. | http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/08/business/campbell-labels-will-disclose-gmo-ingredients.html?\_r=0 |

**Part V: Opposing Evidence** EVERY GROUP MEMBER MUST CONTRIBUTE 2 MINIMUM

1. *Research your case.*
2. *Each time you find a statistic or a relevant piece of information, add it to the chart and categorize it.*
3. *To find legislation, use Thomas.gov*
4. *To find current events, use EBSCOhost or Google News search.*
5. *To find court cases, use Oyez.org*

**Requirement: You MUST include several Statistics and Constitutional Connection (amendments)**

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| **Type of Evidence** | **Supportive Information-Facts** | **Significance-Relevant to your topic** | **Citation** *(use EasyBib--add source as you go)* |
| Pending Federal Legislation | On July 23, 2015, the House of Representatives passed HR 1599, ironically misnamed the “Safe and Accurate Food Labeling Act,” although referred to, by consumers, the “Deny Americans the Right to Know,” or the dark act. This bill was approved by the house 275-150 in which produces aren’t required to label a GM product. In addition, this bill specifically prevents separate states from establishing their own GMO labeling laws (if passed by Senate, it would cancel Vermont’s law). | This pending federal legislation has a compelling connection with GMO’s due to the fact that it determines the House (½ to legislation) believes genetically modified products will NOT have to contain a label to espouse the elements used to construct that product. Over the past few decades, federal authorities have been debating about whether or not they should require GMO’s to contain a label. With this pending legislation, (if senate passes it) GMO’s could possibly be required to embrace labels. On the contrary, the bill we are proposing requires GMO’s to have labels therefore is opposing evidence. | Labeling Law." *Reuters*. Thomson Reuters, 23 July 2015. Web. 22 Feb. 2016.  "House Passes Bill Anti GMO Labeling Law." *Mercola.com*. Web. 22 Feb. 2016. |
| Constitutional connection | The Preamble states that the Constitution stands to “secure the blessings of liberty” however by passing the GMO labeling bill, the blessings of liberty are violated because all companies will be forced BY LAW to label their products. Liberty is the state of being free in any society, without any repression from an authoritative force. | If this law passes, then the Constitution will have to change. Who has liberty, and who doesn’t? The authority will be the only people that can answer that question. This is what happened throughout the 1700’s, Parliament were the only people who could appoint freedom to people. Therefore, history would only repeat itself if this bill was to pass. | "The Constitution of the United States of America." *American Civil Liberties Union*. ACLU, 2015. Web. 23 Feb. 2016. <<https://www.aclu.org/constitution-united-states-america#4>>  . |
| Constitutional Connection | The first amendment to the Constitution guarantees the freedom of expression (freedom of speech), by preventing Congress from restricting the rights of individuals to speak freely. However, passing a mandatory GMO labeling bill would violate agriculture companies’ (which produce GM crops or products) free speech rights listed in the first amendment. This is due to the fact that they would be forced to encompass a label which embraces the constituents as well as the techniques used to form that product, therefore aren’t allowed to choose not to inherit this legislation ultimately forcing them to express GMO ingredients (violates free expression). | This constitutional connection has a significant relationship to our topic due to the fact that it provides evidence as to why companies shouldn’t be required to encompass our bill which forces companies to label their GMO ingredients to notify consumers. In addition, companies have the free expression clause listed in the Constitution (which applies to everybody) therefore requiring them to label certain ingredients violates their rights since it’s up to them as to what they would like to label and what they wouldn’t. Ultimately, this Constitutional Connection provides evidence as to why it isn’t fair to companies, in the case of which our bill is passed. | "First Amendment." *LII / Legal Information Institute*. Web. 23 Feb. 2016. |
| Statistics (Research Results) | Recently, politicians have been researching and predicting as to what may happening if the U.S. requires mandatory labeling of GM ingredients. One major issue that arises when talking about this issue is how long it will take to enforce this law, if created. Researchers stated that first the law would have to get through the Supreme Court which would be very strenuous. This is due to the freedom of speech which is entitled to agricultural companies as well (forced to express ingredients in products). In addition, state governments also have preemption issues with the federal government which will also delay the process. Ultimately, at the end of the day, even if Congress decides to pass a bill, similar to ours, it would take an abundance of time to enforce. | These predictions (research) have a significant correlation to our bill, mandating labeling for GMO’s due to the fact that it raises questions as to whether the bill will actually go into effect. In other words, at the end of the day if Congress does approve this bill, it would have to go through the court system (concerning constitutionality) before the bill could actually be enforced. Before it is, we may face new GMO’s issues as will as controversies which need more legislation, although how many can we make to keep up with the changing obstacles. Ultimately, the abundance of time it will take in order to enforce our bill raises questions in lawmaker’s minds of whether the bill is actually worth all of the effort with new uprising issues. | Entine, Jon. "Why We Oppose GMO Labeling: Science and the Law." *The Huffington Post*. TheHuffingtonPost.com. Web. 25 Feb. 2016. |
| Statistics  (Study) | Recent studies have shown us that mandating the labeling of GMO’s would cause food prices to rise significantly ultimately resulting in an overwhelmed economy. This is due to the fact that our entire country’s food system (billions of dollars) would have to be changed in order to separate or segregate Non-Gmo foods from those with GMO’s. These changes would be colossal therefore would without a doubt raise food prices, not only of GMO’s, but of all food products. | This has a significant relationship to our bill, which mandates labeling of GMO’s because it opposes our bill. This is due to the fact that this recent research shows that labeling GMO’s is unreasonable because it will cause an economic crisis due to the substantial changes that would have to be made to our country’s food system. Conclusively, this research opposes our bill because if labeling GM ingredients is mandated then segregating Non-GMO and GMO products will cost an abundance of money therefore will make all food products more expensive (less consumers can buy = lower economy). | “National Corn Growers Applaud Proposal to Avoid Patchwork of GMO Labeling Laws”.Ebesco. The Times-News at magicvalley com. Tribune Content Agency, LLC. 22 February 2016. Web 22 February 2016.  "GMO Foods: Why We Shouldn't Label (Or Worry About) Genetically Modified Products." *Mic*. Web. 25 Feb. 2016. |
| Statistics  (Research Results) | GMO products and crops shouldn’t have mandatory labeling due to the fact that it applies a false warning about harmful health effects. Recent studies have shown that there is no adequate known research indicating that genetically engineered products harm human’s health. In addition, we also seen through studies that GMO’s have to adhere the same safety requirements as other normal produce, therefore making it safe for human consumption (compared to any other product that is approved by the FDA) | This research has an upholding connection to our bill, making labeling GMO’s mandatory due to the fact that this research shows that there is no point in labeling GM ingredients due to the fact that they undergo the same safety requirements as any other product which is approved by the FDA. In other words, as of right now, there are woefully inadequate databases therefore we cannot say for sure that GMO’s are associated with health issues ultimately showing that mandating labeling of a product (with GM ingredients) which is just like any other serves no purpose. | Brody, Jane E. “Fear, Not Fact, Behind G.M.O. Labeling.” New York Times 8 June 2015: D7(L) Opposing Viewpoints in Context. Web. 23 Feb. 2016.  "Why We’re Not Ready for GMO Labeling - Yet." *» Scienceline*. Web. 25 Feb. 2016. |
| Court Case | Recently, in 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court decided in the case of  *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* in which the Supreme Court constrained content-based speech regulations. In this case, Cycle Reed, a pastor at Good News Community Church rented space at an elementary school. Once there, Reed placed 17 signs announcing services etc., although they “violated” the town of Gilbert's sign policy. Later, Reed filed a lawsuit against the town claiming the sign code violated the free speech clause entitled to Americans. The Supreme Court ultimately decided that the sign policy was unconstitutional (in favor of Reed) showing that content-based speech regulations are unconstitutional. | This court case has a crucial connection to our bill, mandating GMO labels. In the court case Reed v. Town of Gilbert, the Supreme Court banned content-based speech regulations. This relates to our bill due to the fact that it opposes authorizing labels on all GM crops. In other words, mandating labels is a content-based speech regulation (violates companies 1st Amendment since they shouldn’t be forced to include labels with GM ingredients). Therefore, this case increases the confidence of agricultural companies because similar to this case, our bill calls for a mandatory labeling policy which in terms of this case “violates” the free speech clause. Ultimately, in terms of our bill, GMO’s (labeling policy = unconstitutional?) assume the role of Cycle Reed (signs policy = unconstitutional) ended up prevailing victorious therefore opposing our bill. | "Reed v. Town of Gilbert, Arizona." *SCOTUSblog RSS*. Web. 25 Feb. 2016. |

**Part VI: Supportive Arguments**—***Cite your sources***

What are the three main reasons/arguments that support your topic AND choose the best evidence to support those reasons/arguments?

1. **Main Argument**: We should have the right to assimilate the constituents and operations used to form genetically engineered products.

Evidence: We, as the United States of America, call ourselves the land of the free, and the home of the brave, transporting freedom around the globe, fighting wars in the name of exemption, yet we still cannot know what is in our food! Recently, the production of GMO’s as well as the consumers obtaining them has substantially escalated establishing a question as to why not we are entitled to know what constituents were used to form these products. If GMO’s are like any other product such as natural produce, why are consumers incapable to be apprised of the components used to form that product? Furthermore, the competence to know the ingredients in GMO’s aids individuals in innumerable ways. By disclosing this information, it would harmful to consumers since they wouldn’t be able to stay in line with their ethics as well as food and scientific safety, ultimately negatively impact one’s social, cultural and ethical values. In addition, GMO’s have to persist through the same FDA requirements as any other products therefore provides evidence as to the fact that labels should be included on these products. This is because GMO’s can contain harmful pesticides, herbicides and other chemicals which could case impairment to consumers (they have the same requirements = pesticides/herbicides are less cared about). (2)

One of the major pieces of evidence supporting having the right to comprehend the genetically modified components used to form a product is the U.S. Constitution. As stated in it, “...promote the general welfare…” This goal in the Preamble of the Constitution shows that one of the goals of the U.S. is to contribute to the well being of its citizens. Similar to this, by having our nation espouse our mandatory labeling bill, the U.S. will fulfill one of its goals in the constitution by forcing all agricultural companies to post labeling on their products, notifying consumers of genetically modified ingredients. We have the right, even in the Constitution to know what is in our food, so why aren’t we allowed to?

In addition, more than 1,000,000 people have sent demands to the FDA in favor of labeling GMO’s. Moreover, 90% of Americans even agree with this because it has been shown to cause cancer and infertility in animals. Forty other countries have already mandated this, so isn’t it time? How would you perceive if pesticides, herbicides, and other artificial chemicals were in your food? (3)

1. **Main Argument**: Scientists haven’t conducted enough sufficient research on GMO’s to determine whether they are safe for human consumption and our overall health and well-being.

Evidence: GMO’s are continuing to undergo inspection and scientists are running continuous tests on the reliability and safety of GMO’s on the human body. We do not have enough legitimate information to be able to expect maximum safety and positive results from the genetically modified organisms. Most of the side effects, long-term effects, health defects and potential diseases from GMO’s are still widely unknown to humans. Although the FDA has approved GMO foods to be sold to the public, this is only a simple statement - Scientists and researchers have yet to unveil the hidden truth behind GMO’s and what they can cost us. (1)

Recently, a study testing the nutrition of GMO’s confirmed that there is no existing research confirming the safety of GMO’s, so for precautions, we should begin marking products before we encounter a perilous consequence. If we don’t pursue labeling of GMO’s, humans will be consuming highly hazardous chemicals, of which we mostly don’t understand of what they can cause to our health. Another evidential point is a researcher named Jeffery Smith, who conducted many biological experiments on animals such as pigs, feeding them products containing GMO’s. In his experiments, the results show that the pigs he tested on resulted in lower pregnancies rates and sterile (infertile) conditions. Ultimately, this shows that scientists don’t know what effect GMO’s can have on us, although there have been some very negative results in experiments conducted on other organisms (fed GMO’s). (8)

1. **Main Argument**:GMO labeling will help promote the general welfare.

Evidence: GMO’s are made by genetically splicing the DNA structure of the crop or animal. Thus new proteins are made in the organism, which consumers may be allergic to. According to statistics about 1000 people are dying due to eating GMO’s. However, by labeling all products that contain GMO, it will decrease chances of consumers possibly dying, and/or getting health issues. This will not only help with any allergy related dilemmas, but will also make the population’s diets better. The consumers of GMO’s will recognize how unhealthy eating genetically modified foods is, and naturally will switch over to the organic brands. (3) Furthermore, if consumers start to buy these organic brands, then the smaller farms which grows these organic produce, will get more income. This will result in helping the smaller working companies, rather than the multi-billionare companies. Of course, this helps the general welfare, because it is giving financial support to the mediocre industries. (9)

Additionally, labeling GMO’s will not effect the economy significantly. Article 8 part IV states that that Cambell Soup Company has begun to label their products. Labels on one of their most popular foods “Spaghetti-Os” contain a small warning that states,”Partially produced with genetic engineering. For more information about G.M.O ingredients, visit Whatsinmyfood.com.” This shows how one of the world’s largest companies is taken steps to resolve the issues consumers face because GMO’s are not labeled. Ultimately, GMo labeling will help the general welfare due to reduced medical outbreaks, healthier options and many more. (8)

**Part VII: Opposing**—***Cite your sources***

What are the three main reasons/arguments opposing your topic AND choose the best evidence to support those reasons/arguments?

**Main Argument**: Forcing GMO manufacturing companies to include these (GM) ingredients on their labels abides as unconstitutional

Evidence: GMO manufacturing companies have the right to freedom of expression therefore suffices that constrained content-based speech regulations are unconstitutional. Over the years, land used to plant and grow GMO’s has become notably high now occupying 178 million hectares in the world. In addition, today, 88% of corn grown in the U.S. is genetically modified and has influenced the rising levels of both genetically modified soy and cotton. Due to the significant growth, consumers question as to why they are not entitled to know what constituents were used to form the products they put into their bodies. Although, companies have argued that they don’t need to disclose this information since they like everybody else have the freedom of expression (don’t need to label GM ingredients). (1)

This has been a major opposing argument in correspondence with our bill due to the fact that it shows our bill may be deemed unconstitutional since the constitution is the major/final deciding body when it comes to laws. In the U.S. Constitution, the first amendment guarantees the freedom of expression (freedom of speech) to ALL people (companies), by preventing Congress from restricting the rights of individuals to speak freely. This violate agriculture companies’ (which produce GM crops or products) free speech rights listed in the first amendment. This is due to the fact that they would be forced to encompass a label which embraces the constituents as well as the techniques used to form that product, therefore aren’t allowed to choose not to inherit this legislation ultimately forcing them to express GMO ingredients. Ultimately, requiring companies to label certain ingredients violates their rights since it’s up to them as to what they would like to label and what they wouldn’t. (10)

**Main Argument**: Mandatory GMO labeling will incapacitate and mutilate consumers

Evidence: GMO’s have a colossal role in the U.S. Food Supply due to the fact that it has been in it for over 20 years now making 70 to 80 percent of the food on our supermarket shelves. After these 20 interminable years, in terms of deliberating whether these products adverse to our health, there has not been a single case of GMO’s of vandalising anyone. Moreover, food prices have declines over the years, as much as 30%. The movements in some states like Vermont have already started to require certain mandatory GMO labels. As this maybe seen as a benefit (knowing what is in your food) it would eliminate all GMO cost benefits for consumers and small farmers ultimately resulting in a downturn for the U.S. economically. From top to bottom, in the U.S. Food Supply, a bill proposing mandatory labeling of GMO’s will result in costs to inordinately rise. This is due to the fact that GM and Non-GM will have to be segregated as they advance through the production and supply chain which is not as easy as you think due to the high chances of cross-contamination. These effects will not only be felt by companies, but by grocers too since it will make it more difficult for them to supply their consumer with affordable items. Recently, economists at Cornell University, looked at the repercussions of a bill similar to ours on a family’s income. They found that a family of four would pay an average of $500 more each year for groceries while larger families may have a rising cost of more than $1,500 a year. This may not impact us due to the fact that the average household income in Livingston, NJ is $133,271 however senior citizens along with other families which have an income between $10,000 and $20,000 will be those that are more significantly impacted. Ultimately, our bill which requires all genetically modified foods in the U.S. to encompass a label which embraces the constituents as well as the techniques used to form that product, will not only affect large agricultural companies, in fact, it will also affect the prices we pay for food and the viability of our local economies. (15)

**Main Argument:** GMO’s don’t endanger people’s health (therefore labels shouldn’t be required)

Evidence: For thousands of years farmers have utilized selective breeding to produce healthier organisms, both plants and animals to benefit mankind, such as corn, turkeys, and many varieties of apples. The organisms produced by selective breeding were to be resistant to pests, and taste better. To say that GMO’s are a recent creation is incorrect. People for centuries have been ingesting GMO’s and there is no scientific link to say they endanger people’s health. Since 1994, GMO’s, became a commercial product and people became scared because they were created in a laboratory, but there is no difference in the safety between the GMO’s created by farmers versus the GMO’s created by scientists. (15)

There is no scientific consensus in the United States or Europe that GMO’s are harmful to people. In fact the big Bio tech companies creating these GMO’s spend a lot of time and money to ensure these organisms our safe for consumers. These big Bio tech companies do not want to get consumers sick by their products and thereby risk negative publicity, getting sued, and losing large profits. The companies creating the GMO’s consult with the FDA to ensure they do extensive testing or else the FDA can block their product. Large medical groups including the World Health Organization and the American Association for the Advancement of Science stated that GMO’s currently approved for the market our safe. (14)

**Optional: Part VIII: Government Spending**

“To create a new program, the government normally gets the money either by cutting funds to an existing program OR by raising taxes.” The budget has two large spending categories, **mandatory** and **discretionary**. Mandatory spending is required by law on specific programs. After those programs are paid for, the president and Congress may use the remaining money for discretionary spending on programs they choose. Each year, roughly 30 percent of the federal budget is in discretionary spending. (Note-taking format done with your group)

**A.** **Indicate whether your Bill’s spending be discretionary or mandatory? *Hint: EVERYONE should be DISCRETIONARY.***  Our bill’s spending will be discretionary.

**B: Complete the following sentence using information from the Executive Agency chart and the Federal Budget chart.**

*The executive department/agency that will receive funding for our bill is the Dept. of Health and Human Services/FDA (Food and Drug Association). We will need $1,875,000 annually from the budget to implement our bill. The money will be used for hiring new inspectors in order to ensure all companies label ALL genetically modified ingredients and processes used to form that product. The FDA will have to hire 25 field agents, all of which will start at a base annual salary of $50,000 (= $1,250,000). The FDA will also have to pay $25,000 for each agent to travel which brings the annual cost for one field agent to be $75,000 ($75,000 \* 25 = $1,875,000 annually.)*

**Don’t forget your final Bibliography:** You must cite each section you complete. Attach your formal bibliography to the end of your typed final research. You must have at least five different sources

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