

## Readers react to Los Angeles Times' editorial pointing out flaws in California's GMO labeling bill

The Times points out many of the flaws in legislation (SB 1381) proposed in the California Senate that would require the labeling of food produced with certain “genetic engineering” techniques (“[Base food labeling on fact, not fear](#),” Editorial, May 5). Because the misguided bill would “serve mainly to frighten shoppers,” it would run afoul of the federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, the Food and Drug Administration’s enabling statute. The FDA does not require labeling of foods with genetically engineered ingredients because such information is not “material” — in other words, related to safety or appropriate usage — and would be misleading.

Even if SB 1381 were passed by the Legislature and signed by the governor, the federal courts would probably void it on constitutional grounds. To get us to that point, however, the state would have to spend years and millions of dollars defending the indefensible.

*—Henry I. Miller, MD, Stanford, Calif. Miller, the founding director of the FDA’s Office of Biotechnology, is a fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution.*

Who really has reason to be afraid of labels? Is it not the food industry, which is threatened by the millions of dollars moving into organic food?

One reason labeling has become popular is so people can avoid the whole “is it good or bad” issue and just give the facts to those who care. But the fear is in those who are willing to spend millions to defeat this simple request by the majority of consumers.

*—Dorothy Walker, Calabasas*

I agree that requiring products with bioengineered food to be labeled is primarily based on making consumers afraid. This is one of several issues promoted by the super liberals on the left who like to address problems politically when they should be solved by science.

*—Leroy Miller, West Hills*

Kudos to The Times. Genetic engineering is a time-tested technology that is ancient compared to something as ubiquitous as the latest smartphone.

*—Richard Green, Ventura*