

## Editorial: Congress should step in on GMO labeling wars

Congress might not be accomplishing much these days, but that doesn't mean it's not wrestling with significant issues. One of these, mandatory labeling for some food products, resonates in Oregon, where even two Democratic congressmen disagree forcefully on the subject. Peter DeFazio , who represents the 4th District, believes so deeply that food products containing genetically engineered content should be labeled that he's sponsored legislation to that end. Kurt Schrader , who represents the 5th District, considers such labeling misleading.

Schrader's right, but DeFazio is smartly playing the long game. He knows his bill, the Genetically Engineered Food Right-to-Know Act, isn't going anywhere at the moment. He also knows that Congress will have to act eventually.

Both sides recognize the importance of momentum. "I think that Congress won't meaningfully engage in this issue until there's a few states that have gone forward" with labeling mandates of their own, says DeFazio. "At that point, the industry itself will want something." Vermont adopted a labeling requirement this year, and Connecticut and Maine have adopted requirements that will go into effect when neighboring states take similar action. If Oregonians support a labeling measure, the regulatory patchwork-problem facing the food products industry will grow, as will the need for a national standard.

There may come a time when science argues for labels on certain genetically engineered food products. Until then, no mandate should require them, and in the interest of both consistency and accuracy Congress should make this a matter of law. Assuming it ever sheds its own "do nothing" label, that is.

**Read the full, original article:** [In the end, Congress likely to settle food label dispute: Editorial](#)