

AAAS presidents: 'Anti-GMO harassment of best scientific thinkers must stop now'

In the latest organised attack on science, 14 senior U.S. scientists are being targeted by anti-GM lobby group U.S. Right to Know (USRTK), an offshoot of the failed California GM labelling campaign Yes on 37. USRTK is using the Freedom of Information Act (FoIA) to demand access to years of private emails and other correspondence of these scientists, undoubtedly aiming to undermine their credentials and sully their names in public.

As three former presidents of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, we know how important it is for scientists to engage meaningfully in societal debates about their work. But we also know how important it is for scientists to be able to speak freely in conducting their work, both publicly and privately.

The facts are clear: the scientific consensus on the safety of foods derived from GM plants is equivalent to that on global climate change driven by human activities. The AAAS has issued statements on both subjects, underscoring that climate change is real and that GM technology is safe. Numerous other learned societies and public bodies have reached the same conclusions and continue to be attacked by science deniers on both issues.

USRTK's statements are unambiguous – it views any scientist with the temerity to speak out in public on biotechnology as part of “the PR machine for the chemical-agro industry”.

If we allow ideologically-motivated campaigners to harass and threaten our leading thinkers and intellectual institutions, there will be less progress than we could otherwise achieve. Our civilisation can do better than that. We want to be able to vision a healthy, sustainable and vibrant future. But we can't get there without science.

Read full, original article: [The anti-GM lobby appears to be taking a page out of the Climategate playbook](#)