

## Citizens for Health: James Turner founded advocacy group lobbies for supplement industry, funds Jeffrey Smith

The **Citizens for Health** (CFH), founded in 1992 by nutraceutical industry litigator and lobbyist [James Turner](#) as “the voice of the natural health consumer.” The late Joe Bassett, owner of Toledo, Ohio-based Bassett’s Health Foods, which got a sizable portion of its revenue selling questionable pills and potions, was a [co-founder](#).

CFH’s early campaigns involved protests against aspartame while Turner was lobbying and helping promote approval for use of an alternative “natural” sweetener Stevia. Claiming to be the “voice of the natural health consumer” Citizens for Health is a lobbying arm of the nutraceutical and supplements industry which operates from its co-founder’s James Turner’s (Swankin Turner) law offices. Turner represents numerous clients in the natural products industry.

The catalyzing event for Citizens for Health occurred that May 1992 in Kent, Washington, just north of Tacoma where CFR had an office. FDA agents dressed in bulletproof vests [burst](#) into a clinic where patients were being injected with vitamins, minerals and amino acids to treat a variety of ailments. Captured on videotape by a patient and broadcast widely on the television news, the raid ignited an uproar among alternative devotees, which, then as now, made up a sizable and vocal minority. Alternative-medicine promoters, then as now, allied with Hollywood celebrities to put the government on its heels.

Since then, the Citizens for Health has spurred its army of letter and email writing acolytes into action any time Congress even whispers about imposing reasonable oversight of the largely unregulated industry. It helped killed an effort in 1995 to clarify what could be put on dietary supplement labels, helped take the regulatory fangs out of 2006 dietary supplement and vitamin legislation, blocked legislation New York in 2007 to properly regulate dietary supplements, helped kill a 2010 bill that would have allowed the FDA, for the first time, to move against deceptively promoted supplements and acted as point on numerous campaigns to expand the FDA’s oversight responsibilities.

Citizens for Health may be best known for their campaigns targeting aspartame, a target of Turner well before the founding of CFH. Turner now represents a competitor, Stevia, and simultaneously lobbies for and promotes virtually unregulated over-the-counter “natural” diet supplements. CFH spurs its army of letter and email writing campaigners into action any time Congress debates imposing oversight of the largely unregulated industry. It helped killed an effort in 1995 to clarify what could be put on dietary supplement labels, helped take the regulatory fangs out of 2006 dietary supplement and vitamin legislation, blocked legislation New York in 2007 to properly regulate dietary supplements, helped kill a 2010 bill that would have allowed the FDA, for the first time, to move against deceptively promoted supplements and acted as point on numerous campaigns to expand the FDA’s oversight responsibilities.

Buoyed by the emergence of the “environmental medicine” discipline, Citizens for Health has latched onto nearly every known health scare involving a trigger that can be leveraged into government action. It has instigated or lobbied for regulatory action on GE food, livestock antibiotics, EMF radiation from cell phone towers, artificial sweeteners, childhood vaccines, dietary supplement labeling, chemical exposures in the

food supply, and potential cancer risks from hand-held mobile phones.

Citizens for Health's staff and board are packed with advocates of "alternatives" to mainstream medicine and nutrition — including "healing touch" therapy, anti-aging vitamin treatment, naturopathy, and body-mind-spirit integration. They are a funder and facilitator of Jeffrey Smith's (Institute for Responsible Technology) Seeds of Deception Campaign.

Besides representing the natural products industry and leading the campaign against GMOs, James Turner has in the past been active as a swinger. He is a founder and registered business agent for [Anakosha](#), a self-described "swingers club" in Florida and partner with the [National Coalition for Sexual Freedom](#) (NCSF) with whom he helped launch a "Swing Leadership Conference." He is a senior advisor to the Woodhull Sexual Freedom Alliance, a group linked to the former head of California's Prop 37 labeling icon and ['sex coach'](#) Pam Larry and her former roommate and sexual therapy business partner Adrienne Parker.

## HISTORY

Citizens For Health (Education Foundation)  
1400 16th Street, NW Suite 101  
Washington, DC 20036  
[www.citizens.org](http://www.citizens.org)

## CAMPAIGNS/ACTIVITIES

- Ag Biotech Advocacy Category: Secondary
- Key personnel: James "Jim" Turner<sup>[1]</sup>
- 2008 revenue: \$86,477
- 2008 expenses: \$70,842
- Primary income sources: Contributions (Corporate)
- 501c3

### Supporting GMO Labeling

A key funder and sponsor of [Jeffrey M. Smith](#) and other GMO labeling campaigns.<sup>[2]</sup> Citizens for Health was part of a 1997 Mothers for Natural Law Party (Maharishi) organized organic coalition to protect the integrity of organic food from GMOs which was also supported by Genetic-ID.<sup>[3]</sup>

Genetic-ID founder John Fagan was also involved with Citizens for Health's (James S. Turner) campaign

against aspartame making claims that aspartame was a hidden GMO.[\[4\]](#) [\[5\]](#)

## Opposing Nutraceutical Labeling

While promoting labeling of GMOs as a consumer right to know, CEH vehemently opposes attempts to require ingredient disclosure labels[\[6\]](#) on dietary supplements and nutraceuticals.[\[7\]](#)

## KEY PEOPLE

- [James Turner](#)

## AFFILIATIONS

- Partners in the “Just Label It” campaign.
- Funding source and promoters of Jeffrey Smith’s Genetic Roulette Movie and book tours.

## CRITICISMS

- [The Supplement Industry’s Hypocrisy](#), by Henry Miller, Roll Call, August 27, 2013.
- [When Quackery Masquerades as Free Choice](#), by Colby Vorland, Nutritional Science, May 23, 2012.
- [Most unreliable health sites](#), Quack Files, October 6, 2004.
- [SB 31 v Health Freedom](#), Science Blogs, April 7 2011.

## References

- [1 http://www.citizens.org/tag/jim-turner/](#)
- [2 http://www.citizens.org/take-action/preserve-your-right-to-know-which-foods-contain-gmos/](#)
- [3 http://www.safe-food.org/-campaign/about.html](#)
- [4 http://portland.indymedia.org/en/2004/10/298627.shtml](#)
- [5 http://www.independent.co.uk/news/worlds-top-sweetener-is-made-with-gm-bacteria-1101176.html](#)
- [6 http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/s1425/text](#)
- [7 http://org.salsalabs.com/o/750/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action\\_KEY=14103](#)