

3/22/15

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To Whom It May Concern in the Legislature:

I am writing to you concerning the upcoming raw milk bill. Although I strongly support keeping our food supply safe, I also feel that our freedom to chose how and what we eat is a freedom that should be kept free.

1. It is important to know our farmers and how their food is raised/ produced. That is probably one of the strongest motivation to keep farmers interested in keeping our food safe. Raw milk should be kept as a relatively local product. I feel these farmers make a huge effort to educate us about their product. They tend to be transparent and proud of how their product is produced. The more parties that handle any product, the more that product stands the chance of mishandling.

2. It is important that people understand the inherent risks in eating all foods, from a raw carrot, to meat, to dairy products, and processed foods. That should be part of anyone's food knowledge. The fact that so many people have sickened and regrettably, also have died with our more "industrial" food products is testament to how much more unsafe food gets as the processing gets larger. We are so removed from that process, that those who produce that kind of food attain an annominity and no longer see the market/public who buys the product as friends and neighbors.

Sloppiness and unhygienic behavior is hard to trace. I believe that is this sector that government should have its largest role.

3. People who seek more raw and unprocessed foods tend to educate themselves better as to its handling.

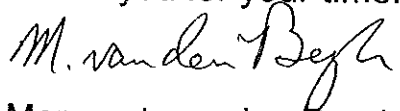
4. We are not living in the times when raw milk was a danger through diseases we did not understand, unhygienic handling of the milk, unavailability of testing of cows/milk, and vaccines as necessary.

5. I do believe that farmers who sell raw milk should be given safety guidelines that are reasonable, affordable, and they should be encouraged and assisted to be successful in their endeavors.

Raw milk is MUCH safer than alcohol, tobacco, corn syrups, sodas, and fast foods. These are extremely dangerous and should be banned/or severely regulated in my opinion. (OK, maybe not the wine!). Raw milk has many superior health benefits over processed milk. I have been consuming raw milk for over 7 years now with never a problem. I also consumed much raw milk when I was a child. I am a health care professional, my father ran many dairies when he was alive, and I feel like I have some depth of understanding in the benefits and precautions of dairy products.

Please support the right to have us have the right to choose raw milk if we so wish.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. van den Bergh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'M' and 'B'.

Margaret van den Bergh