

House resolution requesting the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to revise its draft guidance on nutritional labeling to eliminate the added sugars listing requirement for honey and pure maple syrup

Offered by: Committee on Agriculture and Forestry and Committee on Commerce and Economic Development

Whereas, in February 2016, 11 state maple product associations wrote to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to express their concern regarding false and misleading labeling of products as maple products, despite the sparsity or total lack of either real maple syrup or flavor in these products, and

Whereas, in March 2016, a bipartisan group of federal legislators, including the entire Vermont Congressional Delegation, wrote to the FDA in support of the maple sugar associations' position on maple labeling, and

Whereas, on May 27, 2016, the FDA issued a final rule (81 FR 33742) updating the nutritional facts labeling requirements for package foods to reflect its 2015–2020 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, and

Whereas, the rule requires the inclusion of added sugars in the nutritional facts labeling, including for pure maple syrup and honey, even though absolutely no sugar is added to these products, and

Whereas, this new requirement creates labeling problems for maple syrup and honey, because rather than providing accurate nutritional information, it actually serves to mislead and misinform the public about these products, and

Whereas, Vermont Administrative Rule 2:4-205:1(l) defines maple products as “only maple syrup, maple sugar, maple cream, or any other product in which the sugar content is entirely derived from pure maple sap and to which nothing has been added,” and

Whereas, in February 2018, the FDA issued the *Draft Guidance for Industry: Declaration of Added Sugars on Honey, Maple Syrup, and Certain Cranberry Products*, and

Whereas, in response to objections from producers of pure maple syrup, the FDA proposed the cumbersome solution of adding a “†” symbol by the term added sugars and authorizing pure maple syrup producers to include a supplemental denial of any added sugars, and

Whereas, at a May 1 joint appearance with Vermont maple syrup producers at Morse Farm Sugarworks in Montpelier, U.S. Senator Leahy and U.S. Representative Welch criticized the labeling proposal as misinforming consumers about the contents of pure maple syrup and as harming the maple syrup industry, now therefore be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives:

That this legislative body requests the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to revise its draft guidance on nutritional labeling to eliminate the added sugars listing requirement for honey and pure maple syrup, and be it further

Resolved: That the Clerk of the House be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the FDA, the Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association, the Vermont Beekeepers Association, and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.