

**Opening Statement
Chairman Fred Upton
June 18, 2015**

A National Framework for the Review and Labeling of Biotechnology in Food

Good Morning. Thank you Chairman Pitts for holding this important hearing to further examine the role biotechnology plays on our nation's farms and in our food supply. I understand that this is a sensitive issue and one that folks are passionate about. It is the job of this subcommittee to establish a record based on the facts and the science and, as we have done so many times this Congress, pass legislation that is in the best interests of our constituents and our economy.

At the hearing we held on these issues in December and in other venues since, FDA has been very clear that the premarket consultation process they currently have in place to review food produced from genetically engineered crops is rigorous and the agency has no basis for questioning their safety. This position is shared by the World Health Organization and every other legitimate health and scientific body that has examined the evidence.

Nonetheless, there are a number of state-specific labeling requirements in various stages of consideration that are inconsistent and would cast doubt over the safety of biotechnology, confuse consumers, and increase food costs. Fortunately, Congressmen Mike Pompeo (R-KS) and G. K. Butterfield (D-NC) have been working tirelessly on putting together a national framework that maintains FDA's current review process, codifies federal labeling standards and related requirements, and establishes a certification process at the Department of Agriculture—consistent with the current organic program—for the labeling of

products as having been produced or developed without the use of genetic engineering.

The draft amendment to H.R. 1599 circulated before this hearing is another step in the right direction and I commend the Agriculture Committee for working with us to get this bill to the House floor as soon as possible. With that, I yield the balance of my time to Mr. Pompeo.