IDFA
International
Dairy Foods Association

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

July 28, 2026

Dear Governor Hochul,

The International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) and our member companies write in support of a veto of New' York's "Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act" (S.1239F/A.1556G) due to concerns that the bill will increase food prices for consumers, thwart innovation in the dairy industry, and ultimately place a significant regulatory and financial burden not only on industry but also on the state.

IDFA represents the nation's dairy manufacturing and marketing industry, which supports more than 61,500 jobs that generate $3.9 billion in overall economic impact in New York. IDFA's diverse membership ranges from multinational organizations to single-plant companies, from dairy companies and cooperatives to food retailers and suppliers, all on the cutting edge of innovation and sustainable business practices. Together, they represent most of the milk, cheese, ice cream, yogurt and cultured products, and dairy ingredients produced and marketed in New York, the United States and sold throughout the world.

IDFA works with numerous dairy companies in New York- many of which call the Empire State home- and is actively engaged with legislative efforts that support both consumers and the dairy supply chain from farm to processing plant. Ultimately, the "Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act" harms both constituencies.

Thanks to your administration's support for intentional, targeted investments, New York has grown into a national powerhouse in dairy food manufacturing. The state is a leading producer of cultured dairy products (yogurt, sour cream cheese and cottage cheese), milk, cheese, ice cream and dairy ingredients. New York's focus on dairy economic development has attracted $2.8 billion in new investments, resulting in family-sustaining job creation and retention at the state's 200 processing plants. These investments benefit New York consumers whose demand for high-protein, nutrient-dense foods is driving growth in dairy.

Safety determinations for GRAS (generally recognized as safe) substances are completed by qualified industry experts based on either a history of safe use or publicly available evidence-based science. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) conducts oversight of these substances by conducting reviews of voluntary GRAS notifications submitted by industry and through post market assessments of GRAS substances already included in foods in the marketplace when science supports the

need to do such reassessments.  In many cases, self-affirmed GRAS determinations are for ingredients that have a long history of safe use in dairy products, including cultures and enzymes used to make yogurt and cottage cheese.

The Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act's mandatory GRAS reporting provisions for individual and combinations of GRAS substances would inundate the Department of Agriculture and Markets (Department) with potentially thousands of complex scientific reports, often exceeding 500 pages. The bill requires the Department to determine "completeness" of each report, suggesting that staff at the Department will need the technical expertise to determine if a New York GRAS report meets FDA's GRAS requirements, codified in federal regulations. Importantly, New York's bill also goes far beyond federal standards by requiring reports for combinations of and not just individual GRAS substances to be submitted to the Department. This means thousands of new reports will need to be created and sent to the Department for review- making it more time-consuming, and expensive, to get nutritious dairy products to market. And if these reports are not reviewed by the Department for consistency and are simply posted to a public inventory or database, they may vary widely in content and degree of detail, making them essentially useless to anyone reading them. IDFA does not believe that any of this benefits consumers. Lastly, the uncapped user fees raise serious concerns about the potential high cost of compliance for dairy companies, costs that will be passed onto the consumer through higher food prices.

At a time when food affordability remains a top concern for families, this legislation may cause dairy companies to shift their investments elsewhere, impacting the state's dairy farmers and others in the dairy supply chain. All of this could undermine the recent investments in the New York dairy industry.

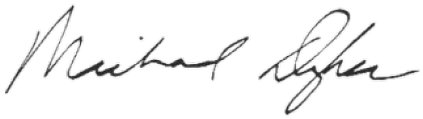
As your team reviews the Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act, we respectfully ask that you consider how the dairy industry is already voluntarily addressing consumer concerns about the safety of ingredients used in U.S. dairy foods. More specifically, the nation's ice cream manufacturers have committed to voluntarily removing certain artificial food dyes in their products made with real milk by 2027. In addition, dairy food companies have committed to discontinuing the use of these same artificial dyes in wholesome dairy products provided to school meal programs.

IDFA has engaged with the FDA and supports the agency's GRAS modernization efforts, including efforts to enhance transparency pertaining to GRAS substances being used in foods sold in the U.S.; such transparency allows both consumers and regulators to understand exactly how many and specifically which GRAS substances are circulating in the U.S. food supply that could lead to potential consumer exposures. A national approach, based on uniform federal standards and enforced by FDA, is the best way to provide meaningful transparency for consumers and regulators without creating a costly and confusing patchwork of state requirements.

IDFA and its member companies are committed to an open dialogue with your office on ways to address the transparency and safety of food ingredients, including GRAS

substances, without jeopardizing the state's dairy industry, imposing significant workload challenges on the Department, or increasing food costs on consumers who are already struggling with inflation. We respectfully recommend a veto of the Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act. Thank you for considering IDFA's position.

Sincerely,



Michael Dykes, D.V.M.
President and CEO
International Dairy Foods Association