

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today, a bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives passed the Food Safety Enhancement Act to provide the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) the authority, resources and tools it needs to prevent food-borne illnesses and respond forcefully to any future contamination crisis. Rep. Becerra voted for the bill.

**“In just the past few years we have seen large scale contamination of spinach, peanuts, peppers, pistachios and cookie dough—foods consumed by millions of American families every day,”** Rep. Becerra said. **“As our food supply becomes more global and our farming more industrialized, food-borne illness appears to be on the rise. By increasing and expanding the FDA’s authority, this legislation will help us give consumers peace of mind and increase confidence in our domestic food supply. By enhancing our food safety, this bill is good for consumers, farmers, restaurants and grocers.”**

Each year, 76 million Americans are sickened from consuming contaminated food and 5,000 of these people die. In just the last few years, there has been a string of food-borne illness outbreaks in foods consumed by millions of Americans each day from spinach to peppers to peanuts. This recent series of outbreaks of food-borne illnesses has demonstrated that they are not random, unpreventable occurrences, but are due to widespread problems with our current food safety system, and they underscore the need for this legislation.

The bill establishes an up-to-date registry of all domestic and foreign food facilities selling to American consumers and requires all food facilities operating within the U.S. or importing food to the U.S. to register with FDA annually.

Under the bill, the FDA will have clear authority to issue and require food facilities to meet strong, enforceable performance standards to ensure the safety of various types of food. It also requires the FDA to inspect high-risk food processing facilities at least once every 6-12 months, inspect lower-risk facilities at least once every 18 months to 3 years; and warehouses at least once every 5 years. (The FDA currently inspects all facilities on average only about once every 10 years.) The bill gives FDA the authority to order a recall if a company fails to do so when requested.

This bipartisan, landmark bill is supported by a range of organizations, including Consumers

## **BECERRA VOTES TO IMPROVE FOOD SAFETY AND PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH**

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Union, Consumer Federation of America, American Public Health Association, Association of Schools of Public Health, Center for Science in the Public Interest, The Pew Charitable Trusts, Trust for America's Health, and the Grocery Manufacturers Association.

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