

April 21, 2025

Minnesota Senate
Agriculture, Veterans, Broadband and Rural Development Committee

Dear Chair Putnam and Committee Members,

We the undersigned University of Minnesota Food Science and Nutrition Students support SF188/HF44 the Test and Report Phthalates in Packaged Food bill.

The Mission Statement for the University of Minnesota Food Science and Nutrition Program is as follows:

The Department of Food Science and Nutrition creates and shares knowledge to ensure a safe, healthy, and appealing food supply that supports the well-being and prosperity of people and the environment.

As students at the University of Minnesota's Department of Food Science and Nutrition, we are committed to ensuring that food is healthy, nutritious, and safe for consumers to purchase and feed their families.

We are concerned to learn the results of a study conducted by Consumer Reports in January 2024, which found phthalates in 84 of the 85 grocery items tested, some at concerning levels. Other studies that have tested for phthalates in food found similar results.

Phthalates are a family of chemicals used to make plastic soft and flexible. Studies have shown that phthalates are not bound to plastic and leach out into food and drinks. This could occur from food packaging as well as from processing equipment.

Phthalates are also known endocrine disrupting chemicals that are associated with serious health concerns including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, birth defects, neurodevelopmental disorders, and infertility. Young children and babies are most at risk because their bodies are going through rapid development.

We support this bill because it is a practical approach to provide data to food manufacturers, food scientists, nutritionists, and consumers about the levels of phthalates in food. This bill will help food manufacturers become more sensitive to consumer preferences and take steps to eliminate this chemical from their products. Consumers who want to minimize their exposure to phthalates have a right to know what levels are in the food they purchase. This bill will empower consumers to make informed decisions about the food they buy and eat.

The views expressed in this letter are the personal views of the signers and do not represent the views of the Food Science and Nutrition Department or the University of Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Susan Strom

Hannah Lux

Avery Lees

Alexa Peterson

Teagan Musselman

Katie Olsen

Tallulah Sweet