



Consumer Federation of America

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 19, 2010

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“Yes, Consumers—there is a Santa Claus”! The U.S. Senate Delivers an Early Gift - Passes the FDA Food Safety Act on Sunday, Dec. 19, 2010

Consumer Federation of America applauded the U.S. Senate for passing the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (S. 510) by unanimous consent tonight. The bill must now be voted on by the House before being sent to the President for his signature. The House has passed the legislation twice before and is expected to do so again.

“S. 510 was down but never out,” said Chris Waldrop, Director of the Food Policy Institute at Consumer Federation of America. “Tonight’s Senate vote is an early gift to consumers across the country.”

Carol Tucker-Foreman, distinguished fellow in food policy said, “As a journalist once assured a young girl that her faith in Santa Claus was a justifiable extension of the spirit of the Season, we are gratified to have our faith in the U.S. Senate similarly sustained.”

The FDA Food Safety Modernization Act requires a fundamental shift in the Food and Drug Administration’s food safety program, emphasizing prevention instead of waiting until people become sick or die. The bill specifically directs the FDA to prevent foodborne illness and requires the agency, food processors and produce farmers to identify areas of risk and act to prevent contamination. It also requires the FDA to inspect food processing plants on a more frequent basis and requires the FDA to assure that imported food is as safe as domestically produced food.

In an era of rank partisanship, CFA is grateful to Senators from both parties who joined forces to pass this legislation. We are especially thankful for the leadership of Senators Durbin, Harkin, Dodd, Enzi, Gregg and Burr and the staff of the HELP Committee for their tireless efforts to pass this important legislation. We thank Senators Reid and McConnell for coming to agreement so the bill could pass tonight by unanimous consent.

We urge the House to act quickly next Tuesday to pass the Senate bill and send it to the President for his signature.

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The Consumer Federation of America is an association of nearly 300 nonprofit consumer organizations that was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy and education.