

SAMPLE LETTER TO YOUR STATE SENATOR

Dear Senator,

I am writing you to express my serious concerns about genetically engineered (GE) fish. Given the potential human health and environmental uncertainties posed by genetically engineered fish, I urge you to protect our waters from introduction of engineered fish.

I am quite concerned about the potential impacts of these fish upon my health. Genetically engineered fish are new to the human food supply and present unknown risks to human health, including the potential impacts of significantly elevated growth hormone levels in these fish. The FDA's failure to require toxicological testing for these fish suggests that the agency's review process is favoring the biotech industry and not acting to ensure public safety.

Moreover, the commercialization of these genetically engineered fish poses the potential for irreversible damage to the environment. Fish farms throughout history have repeatedly demonstrated that fish kept in ocean and freshwater pens escape from their confinements. There are compelling scientific studies documenting the potential for escaped genetically engineered fish to become invasive species that could cause permanent ecological damage to wild fish stocks as well as the wider marine environment. These new studies have shown that GE fish are more aggressive, eat more food, and will attract more mates than wild fish. The studies also show that although GE fish will attract more mates, their offspring will be less fit and less likely to survive. As a result, scientists predict that transgenic fish may cause some species to become extinct within only a few generations. When one species becomes extinct, other species will likely be affected. There are already 114 species of fish listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Several states have already taken action against the introduction of engineered fish. Maryland passed a 5-year moratorium that bans GE fish from all waters connected to Chesapeake Bay. California recently introduced stronger legislation that would ban live GE fish from entering the state and require labeling of GE fish when sold in stores. Oregon has taken steps through a state agency that prevent engineered fish from contaminating their waters, and federal agencies have also proposed a ban on GE fish in marine waters in the state of Maine.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to introduce legislation in this state that will protect our waters from genetically engineered fish. I fully support a moratorium on the commercialization of engineered fish.

Sincerely yours,

****Please use this letter as a guideline for submitting your individual comments to your senator. If you don't know who your senator is, go to: www.congress.org***

www.stopgefish.org