

A few weeks ago, July 29<sup>th</sup> to be precise, President Obama signed into law what some of us call The Dark Act – Deny Americans the Right to Know Act. This bill was written by corporations, paid for by corporations and serves no one in this country except large corporations. After many years of building the GMO labeling movement Congress wiped out our right to know by passing a law that allows corporations to continue hiding GMO ingredients.

The DARK Act is a legislative train wreck. It preempts the GE food labeling laws of several states as well as seed and GE fish labeling laws. In place of these laws, the bill gives the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) two years to establish standards for GMO food labeling which will allow companies and producers to use QR codes and 1 - 800 numbers instead of clear, on-package text.

The idea that consumers would have to call or use their phones on each and every product they buy is absurd. And since more than 100 million Americans, mostly the rural elderly and low income, do not even own smartphones, they will not even have access to the digital labeling the law promotes. What's worse, the FDA said the bill's narrow and ambiguous definition of "bioengineering," would "likely mean that many foods from GE sources will not be subject to this bill" and that it "may be difficult" for any GMO food to qualify for labeling under the bill.

All told, the biotech and junk food industries spent about \$400 million to defeat state initiatives, and finally, to buy the votes they needed in Congress to thwart the 80 to 90 percent of Americans who support mandatory labeling of GMO foods.

That's not democracy! When scenarios like this go on in other countries we call it bribery but here we call it the "Democratic process" and in the best interests of the people. Bribery is bribery period, case closed end of discussion! We need a democracy that puts people first! The strength of our democracy is supposed to be tied to each individual voice being heard and every vote counted. But our current system pushes everyday Americans to the sidelines as candidates work to court big money donors and wealthy special interests.

The fight for mandatory GMO labeling has always been something much bigger than a simple label on a food package. It has always been about fighting the systemic corruption in our democracy and our food supply. It's a disgraceful national scandal that in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we - the American public - have just had our basic democratic right to know what's in our food stolen from us. This law is a sham and a shame. Vote with your pocket book.