



The Stouffer Report: *Common Sense Is Not So Common Anymore*

The federal government is working on a bill that, on the surface, looks good. But I am not convinced it is the best way to solve an issue.

The [U.S. House of Representatives](#) passed [H.R. 2749](#), which would make changes to the [Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act](#) in order to improve food safety all over the world. Food handlers would have to implement preventative controls and a food safety plan. Plus, the [United States Secretary of Health and Human Services](#) would have new powers to require new standards for handling and delivering food.

To me, this is a “good news, bad news” situation. The good news is: the way the bill currently reads, criticism would not come to beef producers or farmers’ markets. Grains would not be traced back to the growers, just the warehouse where they were stored. The bad news: food-borne illness is not necessarily something that starts on the farm. Ever since Home Economics classes (or Family and Consumer Sciences, as they like to call them now) started disappearing from our schools, more and more folks have no idea how to handle food. This seems to be the point that the federal government is missing. If we cooked and handled our food correctly, 90 percent of the food recalls that happen would not have to take place at all.

It used to be almost everybody took Home Ec. Now that it is socially unacceptable, or not even offered, most folks under the age of 40 do not know some

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very basic principles behind handling raw meat or cleaning vegetables before they are cooked or served. Little things like not putting cooked meat on the same plate where it was handled raw seem to be foreign concepts to a lot of folks these days. Those "little things" Grandma used to do were done because she knew how to handle food. Now, it seems, the government is supposed to step in and keep us safe from ourselves. This just does not make sense.



This is a trend that is becoming more prevalent every year. Anytime something goes wrong, there is an outcry for the government to step in and fix things. In this instance, all that is needed is a simple lesson in proper food handling, not building the federal bureaucracy to a higher level. This measure made it through the U.S. House within the course of a month and all indications are it will sail through the [U.S. Senate](#) just as quickly.

It is up to us to keep an eye on our government. When they start to get a lot of letters and phone calls on a subject, they tend to start paying attention to you. I think we need to keep reminding them who elected them and who is in charge of this country. Hopefully, this will ensure good legislation gets passed that is beneficial to our country and our future.

Senator Stouffer serves the counties of Carroll, Chariton, Cooper, Howard, Lafayette, Macon, Ray, Saline, and a part of Clay.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by e-mail at bstouffer@senate.mo.gov.

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