



FLORIDA OLIVE COUNCIL, LAA

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16 JUNE 2013

FAX MESSAGE FOR: **Rep. Daniel Webster**
 Attn: Evan Lee
FROM: Florida Olive Council, LAA
 PH: (202) 246-2001
SUBJECT: H.R. 1947

Dear Rep. Webster,

The Florida Olive Council and olive growers from Leesburg to Winter Haven need your help in **opposing** Congressman Gibson's (New York) amendment to the House farm bill, H.R. 1947. That amendment seeks to strike certain language from the bill negatively impacting Florida farmers and consumers. The farm bill olive oil provision (page 533 Line 23) provides for a common sense program requiring imported olive oil to be held to the same standard as American olive oil shipped overseas. The provision is **no cost** to the federal government. Florida olive oil producers are working diligently to help develop a more competitive domestic industry; unfortunately, their efforts are hindered by pervasive olive oil fraud. Fraudulent olive oil, often consisting of a blend of inferior oils and sold as Extra Virgin Olive Oil, lacks the quality that U.S. consumers want and deserve (not to mention that they are paying for). This fact has been documented in several University of California studies and is currently under investigation by the U.S. International Trade Commission.

In addition, fraudulent olive oils have included other oils that are known to cause allergic reactions - a fact not reflected on the label. Several states have legislation addressing this problem. H.R. 1947 includes a provision that will ultimately help screen imported olive oil for fraud and USDA grade violations and require truth-in-labeling. Since 98% of the olive oil consumed in the U.S. is imported, it is essential that imported olive oil be inspected.

Florida and other olive producing states provide the consumer with high quality Extra Virgin Olive Oil at a fair price but we cannot compete with cheap, fraudulently labeled imported product. The Florida Olive Oil Council, LAA and Florida consumers urge you to vote **against** the Gibson amendment.

We look forward to your support protecting the U.S. consumer and the olive growers of Florida. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide more information.

MICHAEL O'HARA GARCIA
President, Florida Olive Council, LAA

End of Message