



# WISCONSIN SAFE MILK COALITION

February 28, 2013

**TO:** Members of the Wisconsin State Legislature

**FR:** Wisconsin Safe Milk Coalition

**RE:** Do Not Co-Sponsor or Support Raw Milk Legislation

On behalf of the state's highly-respected medical and public health communities and the many thousands of Wisconsin residents directly dependent upon the success of the state's \$26.5 billion dairy industry, **we strongly urge you to not support legislation permitting the sale of unpasteurized (raw) milk in Wisconsin.** The reason for our strong opposition to any possible legislation is that it is impossible to make unpasteurized (raw) milk safe.

Studies and public health outbreaks make clear that raw milk can cause people to become ill. Doctors, public health leaders and microbiology professionals recognize the substantial risk for serious infectious diseases to occur with the consumption of unpasteurized milk. Moreover, there is no published scientific evidence of any benefit from raw milk consumption and no evidence that pasteurization reduces the nutritional value of milk.

Nearly 120 raw milk health **outbreaks** have occurred in the United States since 1998 according to the *Real Raw Milk Facts* working group who gathered the facts from the Center for Disease Control's FOOD database and news reports from across the United States. Of the nearly 120 total outbreaks, the overwhelming majority (86) of them came from unpasteurized bottled milk, which resulted in 2,147 illnesses and sadly, two deaths.

Wisconsin has experienced the real-life impacts of a raw milk outbreak. In June 2011, 16 fourth-graders and their family members from Racine County became ill after they drank raw milk at a classmate's birthday party. One of the children became hospitalized as a result of the outbreak. In 2010, 18 people became ill in Michigan after drinking tainted raw milk.

A recent **editorial** appeared in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* entitled, "Another CDC study shows potential peril of raw milk," that suggests that the legislature reject raw milk legislation for the "sake of the state's dairy industry and the health of its citizens."

We strongly urge that you carefully consider the impacts to public health before signing on to any legislation that allows for the sale of raw milk in Wisconsin.

For more information, please call Wisconsin Safe Milk Coalition contact Shawn Pfaff at 608-258-8411.

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