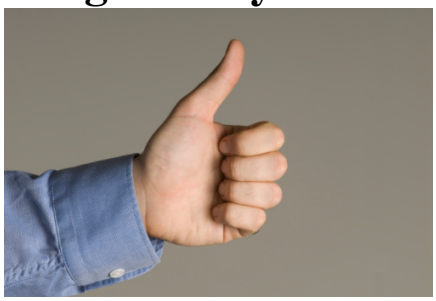
WholeFoods MAGAZINE
Informing and Educating Natural Products Retailers On Dietary Supplements, Herbs, HBC, Homeopathy, Foods

Congress Says "No" to Expanded FTC Authority



Written By:
WholeFoods Magazine Staff

Washington, D.C.—In June, **WholeFoods** told readers about pending legislation that sought to expand the Federal Trade Commission (FTC)'s authority so that the agency could devise and implement its own rules. Now, on June 25, Congress has decided not to include this language in its Wall Street Reform bill (S. 3217).

The Natural Products Association (NPA) called this a "victory" for the natural products industry, given that the legislation could have "undercut the protections of the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA)." The NPA mobilized its members, calling on them to contact their representatives in opposition to the language. According to the NPA, some 28,000 messages were sent to lawmakers through its Web site over the past two months. The NPA had been part of an inter-industry coalition of 50 trade associations to stop Congress from giving the FTC such authority.

The Alliance for Natural Health (ANH-USA) also was active in its lobbying efforts and in the coalition of trade associations. ANH-USA members sent more than 75,000 messages to Congress and the group lobbied its allies in Senate.

Stated Darrell Rogers, ANH-USA's the communications director, "This was an important milestone and a great win. Though we have to stay vigilant, if the FTC expansion issue were to come up again, it would likely be after the November elections during a lame duck session."

Rogers also pointed out that industry cannot become complacent in this development, as several other important issues are still on the table that deserve attention. "We are concerned about the Food Safety bill. In the Senate, we worked with Tom Harkin and Orrin Hatch to make sure supplements were excluded from Codex language. The final House bill contains language that increases jail sentences to 10 years for 'adulterating' or 'misbranding' food or supplements. This is concerning because the FDA could interpret a vitamin company's use of a peer-reviewed study as 'misbranding' or even minor paperwork violations as 'adulterating,'" Rogers stated.

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