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**Crane, Nancy T**

**From:** Luke Simonson [simoluk@iit.edu]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 20, 2002 10:19 PM  
**To:** Crane, Nancy T  
**Subject:** drop labeling of supplement item

02-022N  
02-022N-581  
Luke Simonson

Greetings

I would like to see item 5.9 of agenda item number 6 of the labeling proposal deleted.

The fact is doctors just aren't trained to give nutritional advice and consequently they rarely do.

I am unusually susceptible to cold sores. I went to see a dermatologist and was given a prescription for a variant of acyclovir that cost me \$20 just in co-pay for a one week supply. I knew that lycine counteracts the herpes virus, so I researched on the net and saw that many people with my problem supplement with lycine daily as a preventative measure. Why didn't my doctor tell me that in the first place? He quite possibly didn't even know.

I went out and bought a bottle of lycine and haven't had a cold sore since. A three month supply costs \$10.

Why would I pay a doctor just so I could ask his advice on the matter? Even if he said he didn't think it would work I'd still give it a shot.

Lycine has absolutely no possible side effect. It is not a drug, it is not in any way dangerous. Give the American people some credit for being smart and making decisions for themselves. Even a stupid person can't hurt themself with lycine or most vitamins and minerals or other nutritional supplements. I fully support labeling of dangerous products with information on how to use them safely, but don't tell the people they need an expert to tell them that vitamin C might be good for them.

Nutritional supplements are food. They should not be treated like drugs. If you label them like this it will cause people to think about them as though they are something they need an expert to tell them how to use. You might as well put the same label on twinkies and t-bone steak and tofu, given how much sense it actually makes. This measure will lead to a shift in the way people see supplements that will make passing legislation to restrict public access to them easier for those who stand to benefit from such a law the way Europe has done. An industry such as healthcare should be regulated by the government with the best interest of the patients in mind, rather than the best interest of the share holders of the corporations involved.

Actually I'd like to see more attention paid to the welfare of the consumer and less to that of the corporation by the government in general. While politicians get their campaign checks from corporate interests, it is the consumer that votes. Restricting access to products creates a black market in all cases. If people need the supervision of a doctor or nutritionist to buy supplements some time in the near future it will be the consumers that are hurt. This is not the way to keep health care costs down. I know I'll be mail ordering my lycine from the dominican repulic when that day comes. I will resent the extra expense and I don't doubt that the way I vote will be influenced.

We need to be careful so that people don't one day laugh when they hear the phrase, "the land of the free."