



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, April 21, 2026**

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## **Kavanagh, Kelles, Healthy Food Advocates Announce Passage of Landmark Law to Require Disclosure of Chemical Ingredients and Safety Data for Processed Foods**

*Senator Kavanagh and Assemblymember Dr. Kelles lead landmark legislation banning toxic additives and requiring unprecedented transparency from the food industry*

**ALBANY, NY** — New York State Senator Brian Kavanagh and Assemblymember Dr. Anna Kelles announced that the Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act ([S1239F/A1556G](#)), which passed the Senate on March 23rd with unanimous bipartisan support, passed the Assembly today by a vote of 106-32. This landmark legislation will protect New Yorkers by requiring the food industry to show their work and provide evidence of safety to state regulators for any chemical ingredients added to food sold in New York that bypassed U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) review.

The Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act will require food companies to report to New York regulators any food ingredients they designate in-house as “generally recognized as safe” (GRAS) and decline to disclose to the FDA, along with the scientific basis for considering them safe. The New York Department of Agriculture and Markets will then make that information publicly available. This will close a longstanding federal loophole (sometimes referred to as “secret GRAS”) that has allowed manufacturers to keep potentially harmful chemicals secret from regulators, independent scientists, and consumers.

“Today, in spite of an onslaught of misinformation from the food industry, we are taking a critical step toward protecting New Yorkers from having to guess what potentially harmful chemicals might be lurking in the food we eat,” said **Senator Brian Kavanagh, the prime Senate sponsor**. “Since processed foods are produced and distributed nationally, we hope and expect that the public disclosure required by this legislation will reverberate across the United States, as Americans increasingly demand safety and accountability. I thank Assemblymember Dr. Kelles, Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, Speaker Heastie, our colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and the national and state advocates, scientists, doctors, faith leaders, and community organizations whose determination and support were integral to this effort — as well as the many New Yorkers who just want safer, healthier food for themselves and their families.”

“The GRAS concept was created in 1958 to exempt common ingredients like salt and vinegar from unnecessary review. It was never intended to allow new synthetic chemical additives into the food supply

without independent oversight or transparency,” said **Assemblymember Dr. Anna Kelles, the prime Assembly sponsor**. “Over time, through FDA rulemaking, companies have been allowed to determine for themselves that a chemical is safe without notifying the FDA or making the evidence public. As a result, chemicals can enter the food supply and remain there for years or even decades before concerns are identified through independent research. Trust in the American food supply has eroded as a result. This legislation restores transparency by requiring companies to make public the safety analyses they have already completed under federal standards. It also removes specific chemicals from the food supply that have established links to cancer, hormone disruption, and organ damage. This is a measured, evidence-based approach that reflects bipartisan agreement that the public has a right to know what is in their food and why food companies consider it safe. This transparency will help rebuild trust between New Yorkers, food companies, and the government institutions responsible for protecting public health. With a federal government that is averse to restricting corporate activities and an FDA with constrained resources that relies heavily on industry self-regulation, it is up to states to protect public health. I look forward to working with the Governor to see this bill into law.”

New York’s action comes after the federal government has consistently failed to address this issue for decades. While Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. directed the FDA in March 2025 to explore rulemaking that could eventually close the GRAS loophole, that process could take years to complete, if it happens at all, and faces stiff opposition from the food industry that has blocked federal legislation and regulatory accountability in the past.

“The Center for Science in the Public Interest commends the New York State Legislature for guarding public health and leading the nation in GRAS reform,” said **Jensen Jose, CSPI Regulatory Counsel**. “As federal regulators continue to fall short, Albany lawmakers are setting an example our country and other states can and should follow. After decades of corporate self-interest overriding public safety, this bill represents a monumental step toward a food environment New Yorkers can trust. We urge the Governor to sign the bill into law immediately.”

“New York is stepping up where Washington has slowed down,” said **Jessica Hernandez, Environmental Working Group’s Legislative Director**. “This bill, once enacted into law, will increase transparency and protect consumers from toxic chemicals in New York’s food supply. It represents the most important reform to the U.S. food chemical review process in decades. It will not only protect New Yorkers, but also position the state as a food safety leader by exposing safety oversights in the GRAS loophole for all. EWG applauds Sen. Kavanagh and Assemblymember Dr. Kelles for their leadership in getting this bill passed.”

“The FDA’s system for ensuring the safety of food additives is fundamentally broken,” said **Brian Ronholm, Director of Food Policy at Consumer Reports**. “For too long, food manufacturers have exploited a loophole in federal law that enables them to secretly introduce new additives into their products without undergoing any review by the FDA. This bill will help protect the public by requiring greater transparency when new chemicals are introduced into our food without FDA review. Consumer Reports commends Senator Kavanagh and Assemblymember Kelles for their leadership on this critical food safety issue.”

“This landmark New York legislation sets the U.S. on the right track toward cleaning up our tainted food supply, and we hope that other states and the federal government will soon follow,” said **Todd Wagner, co-founder of FoodFight USA**. “The GRAS loophole has allowed more than 10,000 chemicals into our food system. This is a uniquely American problem—no other country gives companies this kind of power to self-regulate. In much of the world, regulatory systems rely on independent scientific review, require pre-market approval, and account for cumulative effects. As a result, approved additives are in the hundreds, not thousands. It’s time for the US to catch up by requiring public disclosure.”

“On behalf of the faith partners and public health professionals in our network, we at IPHN celebrate the passage of the Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act as an important step toward a safer and healthier food system in New York. In fact, the first-of-its-kind transparency required by this legislation will benefit all Americans. We are grateful to Senator Kavanagh and Assemblymember Dr. Kelles for their tireless leadership in getting this across the finish line,” said **Bob Pezzolesi, Convener, Interfaith Public Health Network**.

“We deserve to know that the food we put on our tables won't make our families sick. For too long, a broken system has stood in the way of that basic assurance,” said **Dr. Karla Sosa, Environmental Defense Fund's Manager for New York State Affairs**. “New York isn't waiting. This bill brings transparency and accountability to a system that has operated in the dark for decades, and it puts pressure on federal regulators to catch up. We commend the Legislature on this bill's passage and urge the Governor to sign it into law.”

In addition to addressing the “secret GRAS” loophole, the New York legislation also prohibits the manufacture and sale of food products containing three harmful additives: Red Dye 3, which has been linked to cancer and behavioral problems in children; potassium bromate, linked to cancer and thyroid disease; and propylparaben, linked to hormone and reproductive system harm. California and the European Union have already taken steps to ban these additives in all or nearly all foods, and a federal ban on Red Dye 3 will take effect next year, after more than a decade of advocacy.

“New Yorkers deserve to know what's in the food they eat and trust that it's safe. This legislation closes a dangerous loophole, increases transparency, and puts public health first. I'm proud to support this important step toward stronger food safety protections in our state and commend Senator Kavanagh and Assemblymember Dr. Anna Kelles for their leadership in advancing this nation-leading legislation,” said **Senator April Baskin**.

“Every day, New Yorkers shop for groceries and expect that food to be safe for their families,” said **Senator Patricia Fahy**. “Right now, ultra-processed foods may contain harmful chemicals like Red Dye 3, potassium bromate, and propylparaben. It is troubling that cancer-causing chemicals that disproportionately affect low-income families do not have to be disclosed to the FDA, underscoring why these loopholes need to be closed. I'm proud to support the Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act to protect New Yorkers' families and their health.”

“This legislation affirms a simple but urgent truth: what remains hidden cannot be governed, and what is ungoverned cannot be trusted. For too long, a federal loophole has allowed chemicals to enter our food supply without scrutiny or accountability. Today, New York draws a clear line—closing that gap, removing harmful additives from our food, and setting a new standard for transparency and public health. Because when families gather at the table, they deserve more than faith—they deserve certainty,” said **Senator Robert Jackson**.

“New Yorkers deserve to know exactly what's in the food on their table. For too long, manufacturers have avoided full transparency. The Food Safety and Chemical Act changes that, giving people the information they need to make safer, informed choices. Thank you to Senator Kavanagh for taking on this issue and pushing for stronger protections for New Yorkers,” said **Senator Rachel May**.

“I got into public service to make people's lives better and our food safety bill does just that. As a food scientist and the proud son of a sausage-maker, I know firsthand how important healthy ingredients and nutritional transparency are to overall health. This bill passed the Senate with unanimous support because keeping families safe isn't political, it's just the right thing to do,” said **Senator Peter Oberacker**.

“Families have a fundamental right to know exactly what’s in the food they put on their tables. This legislation takes decisive action to protect public health by banning harmful additives and ending the loophole that allows substances to be labeled ‘generally recognized as safe’ without full transparency. By requiring clear disclosure of all ingredients, we are holding the food industry to a higher standard and putting accountability where it belongs. I’m grateful to Senator Kavanaugh and Assemblymember Kelles for advancing a bill that prioritizes the health, safety, and trust of every New Yorker,” said **Senator Chris Ryan**.

“New Yorkers deserve to know that the items on their grocery shelves are trustworthy and safe. The ingredients covered by this bill have been documented to cause serious health issues. Passing the Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act will close pre-market approval loopholes, increase food safety, and allow New Yorkers to make more informed decisions for themselves about the food they are putting in their bodies. We cannot wait for the federal government to take action on these dangerous ingredients. We must protect New Yorkers by taking action now,” said **Senator Lea Webb**.

“As a proud representative of the Bronx, I am honored to co-sponsor the Food Safety and Chemical Transparency Act. For far too long, communities like ours have been disproportionately exposed to harmful chemicals in the very products we trust to nourish our families. This legislation is about accountability, transparency, and protecting public health. Every New Yorker deserves to know what is in their food and to feel confident that it is safe. I am proud to stand on the side of our families, our children, and a healthier future for all,” said **Assemblymember George Alvarez**.

“The Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act is about restoring transparency and trust in what we eat. For too long, companies have been allowed to hide behind loopholes like ‘Generally Recognized as Safe’ while keeping critical safety data out of public view. This legislation takes a step forward by prohibiting known harmful additives and requiring full disclosure of Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) substances in order for consumers, not corporations, to have the final say in what ends up on their plates. Public health must come before confidentiality,” said **Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn**.

“For too long, companies have been allowed to self-determine that chemical additives are ‘generally recognized as safe’ without ever sharing the science with regulators or the public. That is a system that falls short, especially when it comes to protecting children, who are more vulnerable to harmful exposures during critical stages of physical and psychological development. The Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act is a straightforward step to bring transparency and accountability to our food system by requiring companies to show their work. Families deserve to care for their children with confidence, knowing the food they are feeding them is safe and not causing harm,” said **Assemblymember Chris Burdick**.

“What we put into our bodies matters. This legislation is about protecting the health of our communities by increasing transparency and holding the food industry accountable for the ingredients they use. For too long, harmful additives have gone unchecked. This bill ensures that New Yorkers are informed, protected and no longer left in the dark about what’s on their plates,” said **Assemblymember Noah Burroughs**.

“Science is real and there is clearly evidence certain chemicals in our food and drink products are unsafe for consumption. As we have watched the federal oversight and regulations around this issue erode, we in New York are stepping up to lead. It is time to ban the bad chemicals. And we need transparency and accountability going forward about the safety of all products we consume. As a mom of three I always worry about the products my children eat and drink. As a state legislator, I can do something about it. It is time we know the facts,” said **Assemblymember Sarah Clark**.

“New Yorkers deserve to feel confident about the safety of the food they bring home. This promotes transparency and accountability, providing families with the necessary information to make informed choices. It’s a significant step towards safeguarding public health and strengthening trust in our food system. I am proud to support these safety initiatives, which ensures that every New Yorker has clear, accessible information about what is in the food they consume,” said **Assemblymember Manny De Los Santos**.

“Additives have increasingly become a part of food products. New Yorkers have been eating foods which contain additives that have been found to be harmful. It is all together appropriate that substances which have been found scientifically to be dangerous should be kept out of our foods. This legislation will ensure that three specific ingredients, red dye 3, potassium bromate, and the preservative propylparaben have not only been found to be dangerous but also have been barred in other jurisdictions,” said **Assemblymember Jeffrey Dinowitz**.

“At a time when federal food and health standards are rapidly unraveling, New York is ensuring that our food is free of unsafe and unnecessary additives. Corporations cannot use the cover of so-called ‘trade secrets’ to neglect public health; our communities deserve to know that their food is both nutritious and safe. Thank you to Assemblymember Kelles for her leadership in passing the Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act,” said **Assemblymember Andrew Hevesi**.

“The Bronx is the unhealthiest county of the 62 counties in the state of New York and this bill will help us combat that fight. By banning certain dyes in food we are keeping children healthy and safe,” said **Assemblymember Chantel Jackson**.

“The ‘Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act’ ensures that the food New Yorkers rely on is safer, more transparent, and free from harmful additives, giving families the confidence they deserve in what they are putting on their tables. Protecting the health of our communities must always be a top priority, and this legislation is a critical step forward. I applaud Dr. Kelles for her leadership on this issue and her unwavering commitment to helping New Yorkers achieve and maintain good health,” said **Assemblymember Rebecca Kassay**.

“Transparency is always a good thing - especially when it comes to what we put in our bodies and the potential lifelong health impacts. I’m proud to sponsor this bill, which will help protect and improve the health of all New Yorkers,” said **Assemblymember Paula Elaine Kay**.

“New Yorkers deserve the strongest possible protections when it comes to the safety of the food we eat,” said **Assemblymember Grace Lee**. “This bill cracks down on dangerous chemicals linked to serious health risks and makes clear that food companies cannot include ingredients that are harmful to our health. We need to protect New Yorkers and ensure companies can’t hide or misrepresent potentially toxic substances in our food.”

“I’m proud to have co-sponsored and voted for the passage of the Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act. New Yorkers deserve to know what is in their food, and to be protected from food additives that we know are harmful. By banning three harmful additives and requiring public disclosure of so-called ‘Generally Recognized as Safe’ substances, we are finally pulling back the curtain on a system that has allowed food companies to keep dangerous ingredients hidden from the public for far too long. I urge the Governor to sign this legislation ASAP,” said **Assemblymember Dana Levenberg**.

“No family should have to worry that the food on their table is making them sick. This bill removes some of the most concerning additives from school meals and forces manufacturers to be honest about what

they are putting in our food. New York has an opportunity to set a real standard here, and I am glad to stand behind it,” said **Assemblymember Amy Paulin**.

“New Yorkers deserve to know what’s in the food they put on their tables and feed their families,” said **Assemblymember Gabriella A. Romero**. “For too long, corporations have been allowed to hide behind loopholes and keep consumers in the dark about potentially harmful chemicals. The Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act is about putting people first - protecting public health and increasing transparency. I’m proud to support this critical step toward a safer, more honest food system.”

"Consumers have a right to know what is in the food they purchase for themselves and their families. For too long, manufacturers have loaded foods with synthetic dyes and dangerous additives while failing to provide the transparency that consumers deserve. As a proud co-sponsor of the Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act, I look forward to seeing this bill signed into law to give consumers the information they need to make healthier decisions and avoid the serious health consequences that continued exposure to these dyes and additives can bring," said **Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal**.

“I am proud to be a co-sponsor of the “Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act” A1556G . Congratulations to my colleague Assemblywoman Dr. Anna Kelles for her advocacy in prohibiting dangerous food coloring additives. The passage of this Legislation recognizes and protects the health and safety of citizens from dangerous additives in our food and snacks,” said **Assemblymember Nader Sayegh**.

“Mounting research and problematic health outcomes are calling into question the role of food additives and environmental contaminants in compromising human health. This law will allow consumers to find out what is in the food they provide to their families, and allow New Yorkers more agency in looking after their health. Thank you to Assemblymember Dr. Anna Kelles and Senator Kavanagh for leading the way on this important issue. I look forward to seeing this bill signed into law,” said **Assemblymember Mary Jane Shimsky**.

“New Yorkers deserve to know what is in the food they eat and not be unknowingly exposed to harmful chemicals. This legislation brings much needed transparency to our food and helps ensure companies are held accountable for the ingredients they put on our shelves. Thank you Assemblymember Kelles and Senator Kavanagh for advancing stronger protections for consumers and families across New York,” said **Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon**.

“New Yorkers deserve to know what’s in the products they bring into their homes and put in their bodies. The Food, Safety, and Chemical Transparency Act is about giving families the information they need to make informed choices, while holding corporations to a higher standard of accountability. Transparency is not optional—it’s essential to public health,” said **Assemblymember Emérita Torres**.

The Food Safety and Chemical Disclosure Act will make New York the first state in the nation to take action on GRAS ingredients, allowing transparency for consumers in New York and across the country. Following passage through the Legislature, it now awaits action by Governor Kathy Hochul.

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