

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2668



Introduced by Representatives
DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO and GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

AN ACT
INFORMING THE PUBLIC ABOUT ADDITIVES IN PET FOOD

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Our pets have always deserved a special place in our homes. The unconditional love we get from our pets is something we consider valuable as we treat them as an integral part of the family. But we often overlook that the pet food we purchase is composed of many extra ingredients, or additives, as well as the basic nutritional components needed to sustain them. These additives perform many functions ranging from preserving the freshness and nutritional value of the food to improving its taste, appearance and smell. Once our pets develop allergies, skin problems, gastrointestinal problems or chronic flea infestations, it will be as devastating to us and detrimental to them. Experts believe that these can be associated with food additives or with nutritional deficiencies.

Propylene glycol, which is normally used as a de-icing fluid for airplanes, is mixed into pet foods to maintain its moisture and texture but it is also added to prevent bacterial growth. But at the same time, it also inhibits the growth of friendly bacteria within the intestines. This additive decreases the amount of moisture in the digestive tract leading to constipation and cancer.

Ethoxyquin, originally designed as a rubber stabilizer and herbicide, was considered poisonous before its approval. It was to be used as a grain preservative in animal feeds for animals with life expectancies of not more than two years before they

are slaughtered. It has been reported to cause liver cancer in dogs and malformations or even death in newborn puppies.

BHT and BHA have been very poorly tested. It is reported to cause liver damage, metabolic stress, fetal abnormalities and serum cholesterol increases. It is added to preserve already rancid fats in the food. Fats in this form are very difficult to digest and can lead to a host of health problems including diarrhea, gas, bad breath and vomiting. Sodium Nitrate converts in the body to nitrosamines which are very carcinogenic. They are added to retain the red color to make the meat look fresh.

Heavy metal toxicity is another concern. Being high on the food chain, meat has been proven to be contaminated with heavy metals such as lead and mercury. Spot checks on cat food have revealed lead levels ranging from .9 ppm to 7.0 ppm while dog food anywhere from 1.0 ppm to 5.6 ppm. Normal levels should never be over .5 ppm. For example, Thimerosal is a mercury containing preservative used in vaccines. Mercury is a known neurotoxin. There is a vast amount of research/discussions globally at this point in time relating to mercury in dental amalgams, vaccinations and the environment in general. Many researchers are linking mercury to the tremendous increase in autism in children.

With all these concerns surrounding additives in pet food, this proposal is timely. This bill seeks to inform the public about such additives in order to make informed choices on what pet food to give their pets and the possible hazards that they may cause.

In view of this bill's importance, its early passage into law is hereby requested.



DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO
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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Pet Food Additive Information Act of 2013.”

SECTION 2. *Requirements for labeling of pet food products.* – The following information shall be included in the packaging of pet food products:

- A) Ingredients and all additives included in the pet food;
- B) A warning if the additive is a proven carcinogen or is proven to cause detrimental side effects based on standards to be set by the Bureau of Food and Drugs.

SECTION 3. *Duty of the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD).* – The BFAD shall provide an appropriate and cost-effective method of verification of the accuracy of the information contained in pet food packaging. It shall also create a database of toxic and harmful activities in pet food according to the following standards:

- A) For general recognition, there must be an expert consensus that the substance is safe for use as a component of food, and;

- B) This expert consensus of safety must be based on either (a) generally available data and information to show common use of the substance in animal feed; (b) scientific procedures, which require the same quantity and quality of scientific data needed for BFAD approval of the substance as a food additive. In addition, this information must be published in the scientific literature.

SECTION 4. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remained of the law or the provision not otherwise affected shall remain valid and subsisting.

SECTION 5. *Repealing Clause.* – Any law, presidential decree or issuance, executive order, letter of instruction, administrative order, rule or regulation contrary or inconsistent with the provisions of this Act is hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 6. *Effectivity Clause.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after following its publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,