

1st Anniversary of White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition & Health Marked with FDA Citizen Petition to Label Gluten

10-Year-Old Celiac Disease Activist Asks POTUS to Lift Up Health Equity Request to Declare Gluten as a Major Food Allergen on All Packaged Foods in the U.S.

PHILADELPHIA, PA, USA, September 28, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In honor of the first anniversary of the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, Jax Bari, age 10, has filed a [Citizen Petition](#) with the FDA to label Gluten as a Major Food Allergen.

Celiac Journey's Citizen Petition is requesting a long-overdue reckoning by the FDA to better protect more than

3.3 million Americans with Celiac Disease by labeling Gluten (Wheat, Barley, Rye and Oats) as a Major Food Allergen on all packaged foods in the U.S., just like labeling Gluten is done in 87 other countries (Docket Number: FDA-2023-P-3942).

“

Food labels are confusing and incomplete, resulting in food insecurity and accidental glutenings. Research has shown that 44% of people on a strict Gluten Free diet still get glutened once a month.”

Leslie Bari



Jax Bari, Celiac Journey, Filed FDA Citizen Petition to Label Gluten as a Major Food Allergen

This Citizen Petition is a response to President Biden's nationwide call-to-action with the "White House Challenge to End Hunger and Build Healthy Communities." Labeling Gluten will reduce the treatment burden, food insecurity and diet-related disease for millions of Americans with Celiac Disease, a potentially life-threatening and life-debilitating food allergy, auto-immune disease and digestive disease from adverse health effects that can arise following Gluten ingestion.

Since 2006, Wheat has been required to be labeled in the

U.S., but Gluten has not. Gluten is found in Wheat, Barley, Rye and most Oats. If you are allergic to one of the top 9 Major Food Allergens, those allergens must be declared on a food label. However, if you have a Gluten allergy, you cannot rely on the manufacturer to declare Gluten on the ingredients label. Instead, you must undertake a Gluten guessing game if the manufacturer does not voluntarily label a product Gluten Free.

The Citizen Petition is actionable now under the FDA's existing authority in the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (21 U.S.C. § 343(x)). Celiac Journey is requesting that the FDA issue a rule to require that all ingredients with Gluten be declared on food labels and for the Biden-Harris Administration to lift up this important work to reduce diet-related disease.

Celiac Journey: Label Gluten and Funding Research



Labeling Gluten comports with the “White House Conference [Pillar #2](#), Integrate nutrition and health: Prioritize the role of nutrition and food security in overall health, including disease prevention and management, and ensure that our health care system addresses the nutrition needs of all people.”

Labeling Gluten is in alignment with the conclusions of international food safety authorities and expert committees comprised of scientists, regulators, physicians, clinicians, individuals and risk managers from academia, government and the food industry including the 2021 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/World Health Organization [Expert Consultation](#) on Risk Assessment of Food Allergens, which included the FDA's Dr. Lauren Jackson and the FDA's Dr. Stefano Luccioli.

According to the 2021 FAO-WHO Expert Consultation: “Based on systematic and thorough assessments which used all three criteria (prevalence, severity and potency), the Committee recommended that” Gluten should be labeled as a priority/major food allergen on packaged foods.

The Citizen Petition was informed by many of the 1,576 public comments submitted to the FDA during Summer 2022 on evaluating the public health importance of protecting Celiac consumers with labeling Gluten as a Major Food Allergen (Docket: FDA-2021-N-0553).

In October 2022, Jax Bari met President Biden, asked the President to help protect him by labeling Gluten and shared his lived experience, "Eating without fear is our hope. Food insecurity happens every day for Celiacs because of the constant threat of cross contact with Gluten, 80% of foods have Gluten in them, the high price of Gluten Free food, the limited availability of Gluten Free food, and moreover Gluten is not required to be labeled on packaged foods in the U.S.."

"Food labels are confusing and incomplete, often resulting in food insecurity and accidental glutenings," said Leslie Bari from @GlutenFreeFinds_pa. Research has revealed that up to 50% of individuals following a Gluten Free diet are inadvertently exposed to Gluten.

"In the spirit of food is medicine, the FDA should prioritize a public health problem long- overdue for robust action: requiring the labeling of Gluten," said Jon Bari, Founder, Celiac Journey. "It's time for the FDA to address this critical consumer protection food safety issue with the urgency it requires."

Celiac Journey respectfully requests that the evaluation of this Citizen Petition be conducted now through the lens of President Biden's Executive Orders 13985 and 14091 on "Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government." To that end, the Citizen Petition includes a detailed analysis illustrating how the Celiac community represents an underserved community which shares a particular characteristic including a chronic disability with a potentially life-threatening and life-debilitating food allergy to eating Gluten. Additionally, the Citizen Petition includes a detailed analysis of how Celiacs belong to an underserved community of persons with disabilities who have systematically been denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life.

For someone with Celiac Disease, eating, sleeping, thinking, learning and working are major life activities that can be impacted on a daily basis through the ingestion of Gluten, and there are various bodily systems which can be impacted including: gastrointestinal (digestive), nervous (anxiety, ataxia and neuropathy), skeletal, reproductive (infertility) and integumentary.

According to the Biden-Harris Administration's National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health: "The toll of hunger and diet-related diseases is not distributed equally; these challenges disproportionately impact communities of color, people living in rural areas, people living in territories, people with disabilities, older adults, LGBTQI+ people, military families, and Veterans."

To read the Citizen Petition, please see, https://downloads.regulations.gov/FDA-2023-P-3942-0001/attachment_1.pdf

To read Celiac Journey's "Takeaways from the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health, Let's Get Gluten Labeled!", please see, www.celiacjourney.com/takeaways

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#HealthEquity

Jon Bari

Celiac Journey

+1 215-880-4595

info@celiacjourney.com

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