

TO: Rep. Mike Huckleberry and the Agriculture Committee
FROM: Donna McClurkan
DATE: May 5, 2010

Thank you for bringing HB 5280 and HB 5837 to the Agriculture Committee. My interest in this legislation comes from several perspectives, and I very much appreciate the opportunity to share them with you today.

I manage one of Southwest Michigan's newest and largest local food-themed farmers' markets. Both House Bills are consistent with our Mission, which is *"to promote local businesses and create economic development around foods that are grown, raised and processed locally."* As such, we serve as an incubator for start-up food businesses. By exempting baked goods, jellies and jams prepared in home kitchens from inspection, the legislation will expand opportunities for Michigan entrepreneurs to vend at markets like ours.

My support for HB 5280/5837 comes with two reservations.

(1) Acidified foods such as vegetables and salsas are considered "potentially hazardous" and are not allowed for sale at farmers' markets, farm stands, etc. To quote a fellow local food advocate, I can *"feed my child Twinkies ... but homemade pickles are dangerous."* As a former (Master's prepared) healthcare provider with a life-long interest in nutrition, I believe there is something inherently wrong with this.

(2) Regarding the \$15,000 limit, a cap on gross receipts for any entrepreneurial venture is antithetical to a free market system.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your support of a safe food system and consumer access to healthy, local foods.

Sincerely,

