



DR. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN

Representing Texas' 26th Congressional District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, October 26, 2007

Contact: Lauren Bean
Lauren.Bean@mail.house.gov

Congressman Burgess introduces legislation aimed at increasing FDA's authority to stop harmful food imports

Washington, DC – Yesterday Congressman Michael Burgess (R-Lewisville) introduced a bill which would give the FDA authority to require foreign countries to take more responsibility for the foods they send to the United States. H.R. 3967, The Imported Food Safety Improvement Act of 2007, would allow the FDA to embargo a specific food from a specific country if there were repeated instances of that food being found contaminated when it arrived in the United States.

"I firmly believe that the FDA needs the ability and explicit authority to immediately stop dangerous foods from coming into this country," said Rep. Burgess. "This bill would give the FDA the tools to do just that. I am also currently working with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission to see what tools they need to stop dangerous consumer products from entering this country."

H.R. 3967 would allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to refuse admission of imported foods from a specified country, growing area, producer, manufacturer or shipper.

"I think of it like this: goods are coming into this country on a conveyor belt, and when we find a bad apple on that belt, the FDA needs to be able to push a big red button and immediately stop the apple from continuing into the line of commerce."

The Imported Food Safety Improvement Act would give the FDA that big red button to push. The FDA would now have the explicit authority they currently do not have to embargo a specified food from a specified country if there were repeated instances in which the type of food or product had been contaminated.

"We must be able to stop countries from sending harmful food products to the United States," said Rep. Burgess. "This bill will allow us to take control of the food that is being sent to America."

###