

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 12:15 p.m. FEBRUARY 4, 2009**

**STATEMENT FROM PEW HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES POLICY PROGRAM  
ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION ACT**

**Erik Olson, director of chemical and food safety programs with Pew Health & Human Services Policy, issued the following statement today in response to the introduction of the Food Safety Modernization Act by Rep. Rosa L. DeLauro:**

"In the midst of an ongoing peanut product recall, the introduction of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) could not be more timely. The FSMA contains key improvements that will enable federal authorities to better ensure the safety of the food supply – by requiring food companies to implement preventive plans and meet performance standards for contaminants in food; creating a system for certifying the safety of imported foods; establishing a strong risk-based inspection regime for food companies; and granting the government explicit authority over all food-production facilities. The legislation also provides essential enforcement tools such as mandatory recall and civil penalties.

"Consumers should not have to live in constant fear of another foodborne-illness outbreak, wondering which food – after peppers and peanuts – could make them sick next. The legislation would go a long way toward improving our broken food safety system.

"We commend Rep. DeLauro for her continued leadership on this important public health issue. By strengthening food safety programs and substantially enhancing authorities and responsibilities to address this issue, the legislation elevates food safety to the prominence it deserves."

Pew's Health and Human Services Policy program seeks to improve the health and well-being of all Americans. Based on research and critical analysis, the program advocates policies that reduce unacceptable health risk, focusing on areas that include consumer, medical and food safety. For more information, visit [www.pewtrusts.org/foodsafety](http://www.pewtrusts.org/foodsafety).

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