



The Honorable Bill Hardwick, Chairman
House Committee on Emerging Issues
Missouri House of Representatives
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Chairman Hardwick,

On behalf of CoverCress, Inc. ("CCI"), I am writing to express strong opposition to House Bill 1169, legislation requiring disclosure of the contents of certain health care products and genetically modified food.

CCI is an innovative startup company, based in St. Louis, MO, developing a new winter oilseed crop under the CoverCress™ brand. Founded in 2013, the company is converting the native winter annual, field pennycress, using plant breeding to improve yield and maturity combined with advanced gene editing tools to improve the quality of the oil and protein meal composition. Our crop, CoverCress™, is a cover crop that it enables corn and soybean farmers to add a new crop into their rotation on existing land during winter and early spring, while providing the environmental benefits of a cover crop, including improved soil health and carbon sequestration.¹

CCI is located within the 39 North AgTech ecosystem anchored by The Danforth Center and Bayer Crop Sciences. We utilize lab space at BRDG Park and greenhouse space at The Danforth Center to advance our research and development efforts. Together with other agribusiness, agtech and agri-food companies located in 39 North, we are part of a community of businesses that generate an economic impact of nearly \$500 million annually.

The language introduced in the bill uses incredibly broad definitions of "gene therapy" products, and "genetically modified" processes, and will invariably lead to unintentional consequences for farmers, producers, seed suppliers, grain handling, grain storage and could layer negative connotations to buyers from our export markets.

Further, the definitions in the legislation are not consistent with federal USDA definitions. A 2016 federal law establishing a national standard for disclosure of bioengineered food also precludes state and local governments from adopting their own standards for labeling of food with genetically modified content. HB 1169 clearly violates the 2016 law's preemption provision.

For these and many other reasons, I strongly oppose HB 1169 and urge you to oppose it as well. We appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mike DeCamp
President and CEO

cc: The Honorable Dean Plocher, Speaker, Missouri House
The Honorable Tracy McCreery, State Senator
The Honorable LaDonna Appelbaum, State Representative
The Honorable Holly Jones, State Representative

¹ Learn more at CoverCress.com.