

NHA/WASHINGTON

update*

DSHEA Under Attack

Watch out: The enemies of health freedom are trying to fly below radar.

The next time you take a multivitamin, consider that it wouldn't be possible without the 1994 Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act—DSHEA. It was a major victory for consumers. More letters were written to Congress on DSHEA than on any other piece of legislation, leading then-President Bill Clinton to say that its passage “speaks to the diligence with which an unofficial army of nutritionally conscious people worked democratically to change the laws in an area deeply important to them.”

DSHEA preserved our right to nutritional supplements by classifying them as foods. This ensured that supplements remained abundant and affordable, helping Americans to achieve good health naturally. Congress summed up DSHEA's potential by noting that “[p]reventive health measures, including education, good nutrition and appropriate use of safe nutritional supplements will limit the incidence of chronic diseases, and reduce long-term health care expenditures.”

Fifteen years later, the prevention-based DSHEA philosophy is more important than ever before—it represents the solution to our current healthcare crisis. So why would anyone want to take DSHEA away?

Enemies Never Rest

Representative Henry Waxman, a staunch DSHEA opponent, once said, “In time, bad laws always reveal themselves. And one enduring truth about Washington is that no issue is ever

settled for good.” One must wonder how Waxman could ever see DSHEA as “bad” when it works so brilliantly for the seven out of ten Americans who take dietary supplements. Even more disturbing is Waxman's ominous hint that even though DSHEA has



been in place for 15 years, it may not be as secure as we think.

Waxman has now co-sponsored HR2749, the Food Safety Enhancement Act, which passed the House of Representatives in late July. On the surface, HR2749 extends and strengthens the FDA's power in the realm of the food supply—a questionable move in itself, given the agency's problems. But buried in this bill are hidden traps designed to weaken DSHEA through the very mechanism that once secured our health freedom: the classification of supplements as foods. HR2749's needless, over-the-top empowerment of the FDA means that the FDA may alter, restrict, or revoke our access to natural

foods and supplements with health-promoting properties.

Vandals in the Night

HR2749 reflects the modus operandi of the enemies of health freedom. Knowing that an open, honest anti-

DSHEA bill would be met with overwhelming resistance from the American public, our enemies instead conceal destructive legislation. Attacks against DSHEA will be hidden in obscure bill riders that are voted on under the cloak of night. S3546, the Dietary Supplement and Nonprescription Drug Consumer Protection Act that dealt a crippling blow to DSHEA and health freedom in 2007, is yet another example—the bill was passed in the middle of the night when many who opposed it had already gone home.

The enemies of health freedom will continue to chip away at DSHEA like vandals in the night. We must not allow the destruction of DSHEA by underhanded legislation! Americans want to continue taking supplements, and it is a crime against democracy that any elected official would try to dismantle the DSHEA that protects our right to do so. We must become extra vigilant against stealth attacks on DSHEA. Please educate yourself on anti-DSHEA legislation, and spread the word to family and friends. For ongoing updates on preserving DSHEA, visit www.nha2009.com. To support DSHEA and health freedom, join the NHA today! ♦

*This editorial is a public service announcement sponsored by the Nutritional Health Alliance (NHA).