

NHA/WASHINGTON

update*

Hidden Landmines

How proposed laws that appear to be helpful can quietly destroy health freedom.

In February, Senator John McCain (R-AZ) introduced, along with co-sponsor Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND), a bill apparently designed to restructure DSHEA (the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act) in a way that could have decimated our right to take vitamins. Although McCain dropped his support for the bill shortly after its introduction, the entire episode may have given us a sneak peek of what new attacks may be leveled at health freedom in our near future.

McCain's bill, the Dietary Supplement Safety Act of 2010, used a classic health tyranny tactic: Create a bill, seemingly reasonable, that quietly contains language which could forever rob Americans of their right to take vitamins as they see fit. McCain's bill seemed harmless enough; it was presented to protect athletes from ingredients that should never appear in supplements in the first place. But a deeper examination of the 12-page bill reveals multiple health freedom landmines, each loaded with enough firepower to destroy the nutritional supplement industry forever.

Dangerous Loopholes

One hidden landmine in McCain's proposed bill would have expanded current adverse event reporting (AER) regulations for supplements. At this point, dietary supplement manufacturers must report adverse events that are serious. Under McCain's bill, such manufacturers would have been required to report all adverse events—even the most

minor. On the surface this might seem inconsequential to consumers. But it would have been a momentous undertaking that would have crippled the nutritional supplement industry while distracting the Federal Drug Administration (FDA).



What's more, expansion of AER seems unrelated to the bill's purported mission of protecting athletes, further suggesting that the "athlete angle" is only pretense for a far more devious intent.

A second major landmine in McCain's bill called for the establishment of a positive list of allowable nutrients. Again, this may seem harmless—but that same mechanism has helped remove thousands of supplements from the European market, leaving consumers unable to promote their own well-being with intelligent nutritional supplementation.

Consider: Who decides whether an herb or ingredient is safe? Would a supplement manufacturer need to spend millions of dollars to prove

that a time-tested nutrient is safe? If no supplement manufacturer could afford those millions, would the nutrient, by default, be condemned as dangerous? And what happens if the FDA deems a substance to be medicinal—as it already has done with many supplements?

To understand the potential culmination of these questions, look to some parts of Europe—where many supplements have been ripped from consumers' hands, while many others are only available in prohibitively expensive, low-potency formulations that can only be obtained with a doctor's prescription. Can you imagine needing a prescription to get a multi-vitamin or vitamin C? Unless we actively protect health freedom, that scenario could be our destiny.

Anticipate Sneak Attacks

McCain's bill was advertised as helping athletes. But instead of simply drafting a law declaring certain offending ingredients illegal, the bill took a deceptive, devious route that seemed to be designed to destroy our right to take supplements.

We must familiarize ourselves with this type of attack on health freedom—more are on the way. Remember: Even the most innocent-seeming bill may contain hidden clauses. Visit the Nutritional Health Alliance at www.NHA2010.com for information on which bills contain such hidden landmines. Do not allow health tyrants uses such underhanded tactics; for health, freedom and liberty join the NHA today! ♦

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