

Product Liability - USA

GE food-labelling bill fails in California Senate

Contributed by **Morrison & Foerster LLP**

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Despite the recent passage of a genetically engineered (GE) food-labelling law in Vermont, and similar bills appearing in legislatures in other states, proponents of labelling have again failed to pass such a law in California. The latest GE food-labelling initiative, SB 1381 (Evans), recently failed on the Senate floor. The defeat follows on the heels of the failure of Proposition 37 in 2012.

SB 1381 was advertised as a cleaner and simpler version of Proposition 37 (for further details please see "[Genetically engineered food labelling bill moves through legislature](#)"). However, the proposed language would have created a compliance framework that would be anything but simple for the food industry. Changes made to the bill in committee exacerbated the problems, making private-enforcer litigation easier and defences for food manufacturers more difficult.

On May 29, despite last-ditch efforts to generate support, proponents of GE food labelling failed to generate enough support to move SB 1381 past the Senate. SB 1381 fell short of the 21-vote threshold necessary to pass out of the upper chamber by three votes (19 for and 16 against).

While the call for GE food labelling has quieted again for now, it would be no surprise if the language of Proposition 37/SB 1381 rose from the dead yet again in the coming year. The proponents of GE food labelling are spreading their message through legislatures in more than half the states, and California remains their prime target.

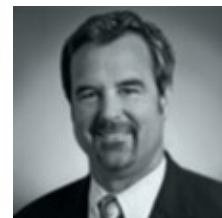
For further information on this topic please contact [Michael Jacob Steel](#) or [Alejandro L Bras](#) at Morrison & Foerster LLP by telephone (+1 415 268 7000), fax (+1 415 268 7522) or email (msteel@mofo.com or abras@mofo.com). The Morrison & Foerster website can be accessed at www.mofo.com.

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Authors

Michael Jacob Steel



Alejandro L Bras



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