

**Testimony of Elisa Odabashian  
West Coast Director of Consumers Union  
California Assembly Health Committee  
June 26, 2007**

Good afternoon. My name is Elisa Odabashian. I'm the West Coast Director of Consumers Union, the nonprofit publisher of *Consumer Reports*.

Consumers Union strongly supports SB 63, which would require the labeling of food derived from cloned animals. Consumers overwhelmingly want cloned food to be labeled. In the last few weeks, *Consumer Reports* conducted a national, random sample telephone survey of consumers across America. We asked two questions about people's attitudes toward cloned food. The first question was, "How concerned are you about eating milk or meat from cloned animals?" Overall, 69 percent were concerned about eating food derived from cloned animals. Our second question was "Do you agree or disagree that cloned milk and meat should be labeled?" A large majority, 89 percent, said they agreed that food from cloned animals should be labeled. These results varied little from region to region across the country.

The FDA has published a preliminary risk assessment of food derived from clones and has indicated that it is unlikely to require labeling of these products once they come to market—which will most likely be by the end of this year. Consumers Union's food safety scientists have analyzed the FDA's risk assessment and have found it woefully inadequate. I'm happy to share our analysis with you. The FDA's assessment was based on only a handful of clones—just 43 dairy cows, 16 beef cattle, and 5 hogs. This is just too little data for consumers to be confident that the radical practice of Somatic Cell Nuclear Transplant (the scientific name for cloning) can produce safe food. The long-term impact on human health of eating cloned food is still unknown. As Eric Schlosser, author of *Fast Food Nation*, stated, "I'd rather eat my running shoes than eat cloned meat."

There are no benefits to consumers from food products derived from cloned animals—not in the price, availability, or quality of food. Furthermore, cloned animals are very sickly, often severely deformed, and must be treated with antibiotics. Most don't survive even one year. Would you want to eat food from such sick animals? Consumers should be able to choose, through labeling, whether or not they want to eat food derived from this radical new technology, about which we still have much to learn. We urge your support of SB 63.