



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

Senator Avella's Bill Requiring Fish Wholesalers to Properly Label Products Passes Senate

ANDREI VASILESCU June 16, 2016

Queens, NY - Yesterday, State Senator Tony Avella's bill (S1147C), requiring wholesalers of fish to properly label fish products, passed the Senate and now awaits action in the Assembly where Assemblymember Ron Kim carries the companion legislation.

Although existing federal law already requires that wholesalers display labels with accurate information of the weight, identity and origin of the fish product, there has been widespread non-compliance to these federal statutes. Wholesalers have been reported to remove original labels, replacing them instead with new or handwritten labels that have inaccurate information on the net-weights, identification or origin of the fish.

Senator Avella's bill addresses the issue by explicitly requiring that the weight, species, and origin of fish be labeled accurately at the wholesale level.

"Consumer protection begins with ensuring that the product being purchased is exactly as advertised. This is true across all sectors of commerce, but doubly so when it comes to the food we eat. Unfortunately, despite federal statutes, wholesalers of fish products have been reported to frequently mislabel their products, replacing federally mandated labels with unofficial labels that inaccurately portray the product's weight, type or origin.

By not accurately labeling food at the wholesale level, it costs retailers, it costs consumers, and it costs the entire industry by ruining confidence in the products being sold.

Trustworthy information is also a matter of health, just as it is a matter of cost. I'm glad that my bill explicitly requiring wholesalers to accurately label fish products has passed the Senate. I urge the Assembly to pass my bill before this year's legislature adjourns so that consumers and retailers alike know exactly what they are buying at the time of purchase," **said State Senator Tony Avella.**

"Senator Tony Avella and I have been working closely with small business owners in the seafood industry to promote more accountability and transparency by wholesalers during transactions. After some pushback and negotiation, we were able to put together legislation that all parties can agree to. I want to thank Senator Avella for advancing this bill in the Senate, and I will do my best to pass the same version in the Assembly before the end of session," **said Assemblymember Ron Kim.**