

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1602

Administrator Paul Ray
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Regulatory Information Service Center (RISC)
General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20405

15 April, 2020.

Dear Administrator Ray,

I am writing to you today at the request of MGP Ingredients, to encourage swift action and review of the FDA's proposed rule, regarding Gluten-Free Labeling of Fermented, Hydrolyzed, or Distilled Foods submitted to the *Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA)*.

The FDA's existing 2013 rule for defining "gluten-free" does not recognize alcohol made from wheat as being a gluten-free product. However, alcohol that is distilled using wheat, is gluten-free because allergenic gluten does not pass through distillation. In order to remedy this, the FDA wrote the proposed rule "*Food Labeling: Gluten-Free Labeling of Fermented, Hydrolyzed, or Distilled Foods*" (80 Fed. Reg. 71990, November 18, 2015).

The comment period for this rule was in 2016 and it was originally set for finalization in April 2017. However, due to delays the FDA submitted this proposed rule to the *Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA)* on February 20, 2020.

MGP Ingredients, Inc. of Atchison, KS is a producer of alcohol and wheat-based products who, along with it's customers, see a significant disadvantage due to the lack of appropriate 'Gluten-Free' labelling. Approval of this proposed rule will allow companies such as MGP Ingredients to market their products to a broader audience, simultaneously increasing the product options available to customers.

Thank you for your assistance with this issue – please keep me informed as the *Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs* considers this proposal.

Yours Sincerely -



Steve Watkins – Member of Congress.