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H.C.R. No. 103

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, Imports of seafood from countries that use
2 substances in aquaculture such as chloramphenicol, nitrofurans,
3 and other veterinary drugs banned for such use in the United States
4 pose potential threats to United States consumers; and

5 WHEREAS, The State of Texas is concerned about the use of
6 certain antibiotics and other banned veterinary drugs in shrimp
7 imported from outside of the United States for consumption in the
8 State of Texas; chloramphenicol, a potent antibiotic, can cause
9 severe toxic effects in humans, including hypoplastic anemia, which
10 is usually irreversible and fatal; and

11 WHEREAS, Because of such human health impacts,
12 chloramphenicol, nitrofurans, and similar veterinary drugs are not
13 approved for use in food-producing animals in the United States;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Other countries, including Thailand, Vietnam, and
16 China have been found to use these drugs in the aquaculture of
17 shrimp and other seafood; and

18 WHEREAS, The United States imports over 400,000 metric tons
19 of shrimp annually, and Thailand, Vietnam, and China are the
20 largest, second largest, and fifth largest exporter of shrimp to
21 the United States, respectively; and

22 WHEREAS, On detection of chloramphenicol in certain
23 shipments of seafood from China and other countries through the use
24 of testing protocols that can detect such substances to 0.3 parts

1 per billion, the European Union and Canada severely restricted
2 imports of shrimp and other food from these countries in 2002; and

3 WHEREAS, The federal Food and Drug Administration inspects
4 only two percent of all seafood imports into the United States and
5 uses a testing procedure that cannot detect the presence of
6 chloramphenicol below one part per billion; and

7 WHEREAS, United States-based companies involved in the
8 importing and processing of shrimp are opposed to the use of
9 chloramphenicol and are working with the domestic shrimp industry
10 and the FDA to develop effective protocols, including in-country
11 testing, certification of foreign testing facilities, and other
12 means to detect banned antibiotics and to exclude all tainted
13 products from the United States market; and

14 WHEREAS, Although the federal Food and Drug Administration
15 tests of imported food did not detect chloramphenicol in shrimp
16 imported from China and other countries in 2002, independent
17 testing performed by or for Alabama, Florida, Louisiana,
18 Mississippi, and Texas detected chloramphenicol in samples of
19 imported shrimp from those countries at levels harmful to human
20 health; and

21 WHEREAS, The denial of entry to the European Union and Canada
22 of contaminated shrimp and other products will likely redirect
23 those contaminated products to the United States; now, therefore,
24 be it

25 RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas
26 hereby express concern about the presence of chloramphenicol,
27 nitrofurans, and other banned veterinary drugs in imported shrimp,

1 the potential adverse impact on the safety of the food supply, and
2 the resultant risk to human health, and call for the FDA to continue
3 working with both importers and domestic stakeholders to develop
4 effective methods of excluding seafood imports containing
5 chloramphenicol, nitrofurans, and other banned veterinary drugs;
6 and, be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas
8 hereby call for immediate and focused actions by the United States
9 government to improve the enforcement of food import restrictions
10 on seafood imports containing chloramphenicol, nitrofurans, and
11 other banned veterinary drugs in order to ensure the safety of the
12 food supply and to protect consumers in the United States and, in
13 particular, in Texas.