



# SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

Oregon State Legislature  
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## NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Molly Woon (503) 986-1074  
[molly.woon@state.or.us](mailto:molly.woon@state.or.us)

**Senate approves legislation to step up food safety enforcement**  
*SB 188 increases penalties Department of Agriculture can impose against violators*

SALEM – Legislation that will give additional tools to the Oregon’s Department of Agriculture’s ability to enforce high standards for food safety won approval from the Oregon Senate today. Currently, the Department can only impose criminal charges for violations, the maximum fine being \$200. SB 188 will allow the Department to issue civil penalties up to \$10,000.

“In a time of ever-increasing concern about food safety, SB 188 provides greater protection for Oregon citizens,” said Sen. Ginny Burdick (D-Portland), who carried the bill on the floor this morning.

The Food Safety Division of the Department of Agriculture is charged with working to prevent food-borne illness by monitoring Oregon's food industry and enforcing state sanitation laws.

“Families need peace of mind that the food on their table is safe. This bill gives the watchdogs of Oregon’s food supply the tools to crack down on violators if needed,” said Sen. Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin).

Across the nation, several food recalls in recent years have raised concern about food quality and inspections. SB 188 will help the Department of Agriculture deter reckless behavior on the part of food processors and grocery stores by significantly raising the Department’s ability to impose fines when food safety regulations have been violated.

SB 188 will now move to the House for consideration.

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