

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN JOHN E. FOGARTY, DEMOCRAT OF RHODE ISLAND,  
BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON POULTRY AND EGGS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE  
ON AGRICULTURE IN SUPPORT OF MANDATORY POULTRY INSPECTION LEGISLATION.  
MARCH 15, 1957.

I am grateful for the opportunity to present my views on mandatory poultry inspection legislation. Poultry inspection is, in my opinion, extremely necessary and desirable to assure the consumer of the cleanliness and wholesomeness of the poultry she purchases. It is also vital to protect the health of workers in the poultry processing industry, which has the unfortunate distinction of the third highest industrial hazard rate of American manufacturing industries.

The stories of abuses by some operators in the poultry processing industry have shocked me, as they must have other Congressmen. The illnesses transmitted by poultry to man is also of great concern to me. I understand that one poultry-borne illness alone, psittacosis, caused three epidemics in 1956. A total of 136 men and women were hit in the outbreaks--three of them fatally.

Because of these facts, I am delighted to learn that mandatory poultry inspection legislation will probably be enacted by this session of Congress. I want to congratulate the gentlemen of this Committee for their great efforts on this vital legislation.

I look forward, as I know you do, that the inspection legislation will be effective in truly protecting consumers and poultry workers. Consumer-protection and health-protection are its two main goals.



These twin objectives will be best met, I believe, by requiring ante-mortem inspection, as well as post-mortem inspection. I do not urge a bird-by-bird ante-mortem inspection. That is unnecessary and overly costly, but the bill should contain a requirement that some form of before-slaughter observation to take out sick and diseased birds be instituted.

I also urge that consumer doubts about the effectiveness of the inspection be dispelled by appointing an agency, whose main task is consumer and health protection, to carry out the inspection function. I do not believe a marketing agency would give the consumer the needed confidence.

These and other points are best met by H.R. 5403, H.R. 5398 and H.R. 5489. These bills avoid the dangerous loopholes which some other measures before this Committee contain. They would provide the best framework for consumer protection. I should like to urge their approval by the Committee.