



## *Senate of Pennsylvania*

### ***Senator Anthony H. Williams***

*8<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District*

*366 Main Capitol Building*

*Harrisburg, PA 17120*

*(717) 787-5970; FAX: (717) 772-0574*

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**DATE:** March 26, 2012  
**TO:** All Senators  
**FROM:** Senator Anthony H. Williams  
**SUBJECT:** Co-sponsorship of Legislation: **Pink Slime in Schools**

In the near future, I will be introducing legislation to address the recent health and safety concern regarding the use of “pink slime” in beef served in school districts. This legislation would prohibit public schools in the Commonwealth from purchasing or serving food treated with ammonium hydroxide or “pink slime.”

Pink slime is a meat byproduct made by grinding excess beef trimmings, cartilage, and connective tissue together while getting rid of excess fat, and liquefying it. These trimmings are more susceptible to containing pathogens, such as E. coli and salmonella. Consequently, the industry exposes the mixture to gaseous ammonia hydroxide, and spins it in a centrifuge to separate the lean portion of meat from the fat portion. Finally, the resulting pink slime is then frozen into bricks and shipped to meat processors that add it to other meat products, such as ground beef.

According to the meat industry and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the byproduct is treated with gaseous ammonia hydroxide in order to effectively kill the bacteria; however, industry and USDA records challenge the chemical’s effectiveness. Since 2005, E. coli has been found 3 times, while salmonella has been found 48 times, in meat containing pink slime during testing for the school lunch program. Multiple supermarkets have already stated that they will no longer carry meat products containing pink slime, including Giant/Martin’s, Wal-Mart, Weis Markets, Wegman’s, Kroger, Safeway, and Stop & Shop. In addition, several fast food restaurants have ceased purchasing beef containing the questionable byproduct, such as McDonalds, Burger King and Taco Bell. Moreover, on March 15, 2012 the USDA issued a statement maintaining that pink slime meets strict safety standards, at the same time deciding to allow schools to opt out of accepting beef containing pink slime this fall. However, my legislation would altogether prohibit the use of pink slime in beef served to our school children.

If you wish to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Shannon A. Sargent, Esq., at 787-5970 or email [ssargent@pasenate.com](mailto:ssargent@pasenate.com).