

Trial Lawyers Unlikely to Get Fat in Michigan

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Restaurants -- fast-food and otherwise -- can breathe a sigh of relief, at least if they're located in Michigan. According to an AP [story](#) [1], Governor Jennifer Granholm signed a bill that bans civil lawsuits against restaurants and other parts of the food industry for serving or preparing foods that supposedly make people fat.

Likely spurred by the failed lawsuits against McDonald's over the past couple of years, Michigan lawmakers sought to prevent such wastes of time and money in their state. Michigan thus joins the ranks of several other states that have already passed similar legislation.

We have long wondered why burgers purchased at McDonald's or Burger King might be intrinsically more fattening than burgers produced in the home or in the corner diner. And we wondered if suits against other producers of high-fat foods might also be the targets of such lawsuits. After all, dairies produce cream and butter, and the extra virgin olive proudly served at upscale Italian eateries is nothing but fat, pure and simple.

Such preventive laws wouldn't stop anyone from seeking legal action if they were harmed by adulterated or mislabeled foods (e.g., a food that contained pathogenic bacteria because of poor handling or storage practices). But they should decrease the waste of taxpayers' money and court time spent in dealing with such illogical and misdirected lawsuits.

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