佛教與 H 提案：
曼都仙諾郡禁止基因改造生物的生長與養殖

Buddhism and Measure H:
Banning the Growing and Raising of Genetically Modified Organisms in Mendocino County

我很感謝法師邀請我今晚來談談。也許有些人想 H 提案和佛法有什麼關係——我們需要利用聽經的時間來了解它？我們應該記得一切法都是佛法；上人也教導我們，我們住在哪裡就對那個國家要盡義務。在世界上，美國是少數的幾個國家——人民能有機會自由地修行佛法，而不受到政府的干擾或壓迫，因爲這是民主國家，有宗教自由。為保持宗教自由和國家的民主，我們這些國民，不論居士或出家眾，都必須負起責任。如果你是一國的公民，你就有義務參與明智的選舉。如果你是老師，就有責任教育學生知識和盡國民的義務。如果你是學生，就該瞭解何謂負責任的公民。如果你都不是以上身份，你還是有責任去盡力減輕這國家一切有情衆生的苦。基於以上的原因，我們應該瞭解 H 提案以及它與佛法的關係。

這佛教首次在一個真正民主的國家出現，在佛教的歷史中這種選舉的義務從未有過。我們該瞭解佛教僧伽和居士與民主政府的關係——參加選舉，確保我們有聰明的民意代表，確保我們有好的法令，瞭解選舉的內容等等，這些在佛教裡都是前所未有的。上人常說他對這國家很感恩，願意盡力幫忙，他總是鼓勵我們做公民的該為政府選賢興能。

I would like to thank the Sangha for inviting me to speak with you tonight. Some of you may be wondering what Measure H has to do with the Buddhadharma and why we are taking time during the period for sutra lectures to discuss it. I think it’s very important to remember that all dharms are Buddhadharms, and that the Venerable Master Hua taught us that we have a responsibility towards the country in which we are living. This is one of the few places in the world where we can freely practice Buddhism without interference or oppression from the government. This is a democratic country in which the principle of freedom of religion is practiced. In order to protect freedom of religion and to maintain the democracy in this country, all the people in the country, including us — both lay Buddhists and monastic Buddhists — must act responsibly. If you are a citizen, you have the responsibility to vote intelligently. If you are a teacher, you have a responsibility to teach the students how to be knowledgeable and responsible citizens of this country. And if you are a student, you should learn what it means to be a responsible citizen. And if you are in none of those categories, you still have a responsibility to do whatever you can to lessen the suffering of all the sentient beings in this country. That is why it is important that you understand about Measure H and its relationship to the Buddhadharma.

Here in the United States is really the first time that Buddhism has existed in a truly democratic country. Throughout most of the history of Buddhism, this kind of responsibility was not an issue. And so the relationship of the Sangha and the Buddhist lay people to a democratic government — voting, making sure we have good representatives in the government, making sure that we have good laws, and that we understand what we are voting for — all these things are relatively new in Buddhism. The Venerable Master Hua often said that he was very grateful to this country and wanted to do whatever
在3月2日的選舉，有兩個重要的提案都會直接影響到萬佛城和法界佛教大學，一是選舉代表本區的郡委員，另一個則是H提案。H提案如果通過，法令將禁止在曼都郡諾郡做基因改造生物的生長養殖。我聽說城內有很多選民收到關於這個議案令人混淆的選舉文宣，而不知到底該反對或贊成它，這是為什麼我要來跟大家討論這個問題。

基因改造生物包括植物、動物、細菌、病毒、樹木、昆蟲及各種有情物都可以由基因工程重新變化，以人造的方式把一種生物的去氧核糖核酸（DNA）移植到另一種生物上；例如植物的去氧核糖核酸移到動物身上，或動物的移到植物上，或甚至於人的去氧核糖核酸移植到你所吃的蔬果裡，這些都是基因工程改造的基因改造生物（GMOs）的例子。這些基因改造生物都不是經過自然繁殖或交配接種而產生的，而是在去氧核糖核酸基本結構上的改變，去氧核糖核酸是決定這個生物如何成長的基本模式。去氧核糖核酸包含基因，基因再製造出核糖核酸，接著製造核酸，核酸再製造蛋白質。蛋白質是一切生物的基本構造。也就是說，基因工程能非自然性地，跨過生物種類的界線來改變所有生物最基本的去氧核糖核酸。將來很可能在無意之中，科學家也會改變人類的去氧核糖核酸，使支持我們身體修行以便開悟的系統受到破壞。

讓我們告訴各位為什麼我會成爲H提案的發起人。在1990年代早期，我讀到科學家把蟲和動物基因放在蔬菜裡的報導，因爲我是素食者所以我很關心它，我可不想吃到有蟲或動物基因的食物，我想那是不道法、不純淨的蔬菜。所以開始調查這回事，結果不但發現這種蔬菜真的已經培植出來，而且還發現他們竟然把人的基因也放進蔬菜裡，因為法令並未規定要加標籤，所以根本無法得知你吃的是否是素菜他能扣留，也決不放棄那些為我們自願的公民確保他們的選舉權，並為他們的選舉事發所以我們現在需要做的就是投票，選舉事再糟糕的選舉結果也要比沒有選舉好。如果選舉沒有改變，我們就需要開始建設一個能夠提供正當選舉的制度。
那時我就給〈金剛菩提海〉寫了一篇短文說明基因工程對素食者造成的危機，希望法總的佛友都能知曉。那時的編輯委員會最後把文章呈給上人定奪，上人說：
「這是非常重要的，你們必須趕快登在〈金剛菩提海〉裡，並且要引起大家的注意。」後來上人問我為甚麼寫了這篇文章？
我說：「這種科技發展很危險，因為它不如法，而且對環境也不好。」上人就說：
「你把它寫出來真好。你說的完全對，我們必須採取行動，否則基因工程就會危害到這個世界，你還應該繼續寫。」
1996年法總的董事會正式通過了一項決議，全文如下：「法總相信基因工程所生產的食物不合佛法，它沒有保證，竄改自然形態，我們的世界在最根本、最危險的層次受到它的影響。沒有標籤的基因工程食物就違反了宗教自由。因為沒有標籤，佛徒就無法避免買到基因改造的食物，以致令佛教素食者違背了他們基本的信仰教理。佛教素食者也無法避免買到含肉類基因的食品。法總鼓勵所有國家都應對基因工程的食物加上標籤。」

不論您受過菩薩戒並且吃素，或者您未受戒但想吃素，您都應該關心經基因改造的生物。因爲目前食物沒有標明，但估計美國約有70-80%包裝食品都是經基因改造卻未註明的。除非能自己耕種，否則您就要買有機的食品。依國家有關食物標準是食品內基因改造生物不能超過1%，所以您如果想吃純素，大概您只有去買有機食品。

有些人或許認爲：「這個問題美國政府會管制的，像美國食物毒品行政處、農業部或環保局應該瞭解，並細心的做實驗；也應該推廣相關法規並敦促食物加標籤，所以我們可以清楚食物的安全性。」一個理想的民主國家應如此。歐洲聯盟對基因改造生物的危險較敏感，因為他們大都不讓基因改造的生物進入市場，進口的基

dangers of genetic engineering for vegetarians, because I wanted all of the members of DRBA (Dharma Realm Buddhist Association) to become aware of the problem. The editorial board of Vajra Bodhi Sea eventually took the article to the Venerable Master, who said that this was really, really important and that they should publish the article right away in a fashion that would draw everyone’s attention to it. Soon afterwards the Master asked me why I wrote the article, and I said, “Well, I think this development in science and technology is very dangerous. It goes against Buddhist principles, and it’s going to not be good for the environment.” The Master then told me that it was very good that I had written the article, that I was completely correct, and if we didn’t do something about it, genetic engineering would cause tremendous damage to the world. He then strongly encouraged me to continue to write about the dangers of this genetic engineering.

In 1996 the Board of Directors of the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association (DRBA) passed a formal resolution about genetically modified organisms, which reads: “DRBA believes that genetic engineering of food is not in accord with the teachings of Buddhism. Buddhism considers genetic engineering of foods to be an unwarranted tampering with the natural patterns of our world at the most basic and dangerous levels. DRBA believes that the lack of labeling of genetically engineered food is a de facto violation of religious freedom. Without labeling, Buddhists have no way to avoid purchasing foods that violate their basic religious beliefs and principles. And Buddhist vegetarians have no way to avoid purchasing foods that contain genes from non-vegetarian sources. The DRBA urges all countries to require labeling of all genetically engineered foods.”

Therefore, if you have taken the Bodhisattva precepts to eat pure vegetarian food, or if you have not taken the Bodhisattva precepts and you want to eat pure vegetarian food, this is an issue that concerns you.

It is estimated that about 70-80% of all the packaged food in the United States has GMOs in it already, even though they are not labeled. The closest you can come to avoiding GMOs in your food, other than growing your own food from organic seed, is to buy organic food, because according to the National Organic Standard, anything that is labeled as officially certified organic cannot have more than a very small amount of GMOs in it. In all other cases, you won’t know whether you are eating GMOs or not.

Some of you may be thinking “Well if there is a problem with GMOs, the US. Government Food and Drug Administration or the Department of Agriculture or the Environmental Protection Agency should be aware of it, do careful testing, and then propagate regulations and do labeling, so that we can know what is safe and what is not safe.” In an ideal democracy, that would be the case. In the
European Union there is a lot more sensitivity to the dangers of GMOs, and for the most part they are not imported into the European Union, and those that are must be labeled. That is not the case in the United States. Why? It is because here in the United States there has been a serious breakdown of our democratic processes on the national level. The simplest way to explain that breakdown is what is known as a “revolving door” between industry and government. In other words, starting with the Clinton administration and now the administration of President Bush, the multinational corporations who make GMO products have contributed tremendous amounts of money to both President Clinton and President Bush and also to many senators and representatives. Because they have a tremendous amount of influence in the government, both Presidents Clinton and Bush appointed people from these industries to do the regulation of these industries, and allowed the industries to tell the government whether their products were safe or not, without the government doing any independent testing. What this means is, on the national level, there is no effective oversight of GMOs and no program of objective testing to see whether these products are safe for human beings and the environment.

Because of this governmental failure, we are all unwilling and uninformed guinea pigs in what is probably the biggest experiment with human health and well-being in all of human history. Not only is that the case, but when these GMOs are released into the environment, they cannot be recalled. They will genetically pollute humans, animals, and plants forever with novel combinations of DNA. Suppose General Motors sells a car model that has some defects. According to the law, General Motors must tell everybody who has bought that car, “We didn’t know it, but there was a defect in the car; please bring it back and we will fix it or give you a new car.” But if we find out that there are dangers or defects in these GMO products, they cannot be recalled. They will be part of our physical nature, and part of the nature of the environment as long as we can conceive.

Because the federal government is not doing its job, I and a number of concerned citizens got together and put Measure H on the ballot. This ballot measure is limited, because we can only regulate things that are not preempted by federal law. For example, we cannot make a law at the county level about anything that has to do with inter-state commerce. And so Measure H is the best that we can do right now to protect people and the environment in Mendocino County. Since the measure takes a novel approach, the banning of growing or raising of GMOs, the international bio-tech companies are very concerned about it and are doing whatever they can to stop it. They are pouring a lot of money into the county to give people false or misleading information about the measure. They are claiming that it is
大、稅款會增高、會干擾隱私權。」這些
都是騙人的，可是我們沒有辦法制止他們
這麼做，他們有勢又多金。

修行大乘佛法是要利益眾生的，所以
我們有個特別的責任，不光是為我們自己的
福利，也是為瑜伽市和曼都仙諾所有的
鄰居，都應該要主動周遭發生的事。您如
果想要更深入地了解佛教和基因工程生物
的關係，請參閱刊登在〈金剛菩提海〉和
〈東西方宗教雜誌〉上的文章。謝謝
gu大家邀請我今晚來這裡和您分享。

編按：經選民投票，此提案已獲多數
通過，正式成爲法令。萬佛聖城所在的曼
都仙諾郡，成爲美國第一個禁止種植及蓄
養基因改造生物的郡縣！

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I would recite sutras occasionally. Basically, I could not sit still. My
legs were very stiff. After some training, I can now sit still for one
hour. The most important factor is patience. This is what I learned.
Since I am aware of the benefits of Chan meditation, I chose to live
very near the Institute for World Religions (Berkeley), where I join
their hour-long Chan meditation every morning at 6 o’clock.

The leg pain you experience in Chan meditation is anguish. You
can hardly sit still. On the other hand, the benefit of aching legs is
you cannot doze off since you are in pain. When I go to Berkeley
Monastery before dawn, I feel sleepy. When I leave after sitting
meditation, my energy level is high and I feel great. This is my own
observation. Aching legs do serve a purpose.

Lastly, I have a very sincere wish. I wish that should the chance
arise in the future, I beseech that our Dharma Masters will go to
China to propagate the Buddhadharmfa taught by our Venerable
Master. This would enable more people starving for Buddhadharmfa
in China to hear the Proper Dharma and help them retrieve what
they have lost. This is my most earnest wish.