

In California, chefs fight for bare-hand contact

March 24 2014, by Fenit Nirappil



Luis Escamilla puts on gloves before cutting prosciutto at the Hock Farm Restaurant in Sacramento, Calif. Under a bill signed last year by Gov. Jerry Brown, chefs and bartenders in California must keep bare hands off food going straight to the plate or the drink glass, and must use gloves or kitchen utensils such as tongs. California, where the law took effect Jan. 1 and will begin enforcement starting in July, will join 41 other states banning bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food. In February, after receiving a petition from bartenders calling for an exemption for the "disposable glove law" the law's author, Assemblyman Richard Pan, D-Sacramento, a pediatrician, has introduced a bill to repeal the new regulation and revisit the

entire issue.(AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli)

California legislators may reverse a new law banning bare hand contact with food at restaurants and bars.

Since January, workers have been required to use gloves or utensils to handle ready-to-eat food, including the rice in a sushi roll and the mint in a mojito.

California chefs and bartenders say adding more gloves to kitchens is unnecessary, wasteful and even unhygienic. They worry workers may forget to change [gloves](#) or lose hand-washing habits.

But regulators say hand-washing isn't enough to stop outbreaks of [foodborne illness](#). Forty one other states already have the no bare hand law.



In this photo taken Wednesday, March 12, 2014, Luis Escamilla wears gloves as he trims a ham at the Hock Farm Restaurant in Sacramento, Calif. at the Hock Farm restaurant in Sacramento, Calif. Under a bill signed last year by Gov. Jerry Brown, chefs and bartenders in California must keep bare hands off food going straight to the plate or the drink glass, and must use gloves or kitchen utensils such as tongs. California, where the law took effect Jan. 1 and will begin enforcement starting in July, will join 41 other states banning bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food. In February, after receiving a petition from bartenders calling for an exemption for the "disposable glove law" the law's author, Assemblyman Richard Pan, D-Sacramento, a pediatrician, has introduced a bill to repeal the new regulation and revisit the entire issue. (AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli)

Democratic Assemblyman Richard Pan of Sacramento says he wants to repeal and revisit the law to make it more flexible for clean restaurants. Inspectors aren't enforcing the [law](#) until July.

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