

The Gourmet Glatt Debate

To the Editor:

I am saddened and appalled at the way our Five Towns Vaad has handled the Gourmet Glatt issue. I have the utmost respect for the rabbis of the Vaad; however I can not stand idly by while an injustice is being done.

I have spoken to a number of rabbis on the Vaad and have been told that Mr. Mark Bolender was not at the meeting where the Vaad decided that he must sell the store. How is it possible that NOT ONE Rabbi

on the Vaad (who signed the letter and attended the meetings) asked or insisted that Mr. Bolender have the opportunity to relay his side of the story? Did the thought of putting this individual (and others supported by this store) out of business without giving him the chance to speak in front of those who are deciding his fate not cross their minds? How can a psak like this be enforced or even given?

I know the Vaad states in their letter "It should be self-evident that such a decision was not taken lightly." However I am not sure it can get any lighter than not hearing the other side of the story.

If the Vaad for whatever reason feels they can't or don't want to supervise this store they don't have to. But why does it bother them so much if another expert in the area of kashrus, a competent halachic authority, a talmid chachom and an individual who has a chezkas kashrus is willing to take that responsibility on his shoulders? Why are they making sure this store goes out of business? This is pure rishus (evil) and does not allow me to believe this is being done lishma (for the sake of heaven).

IRA LEVY
Woodmere

Organ Donor (HOD) Society (www.hods.org) offers a unique organ donor card that allows people to express their desire to donate organs at the moment of brain-stem death (the ruling of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel) or, alternatively, for those who choose to donate organs after cessation of heartbeat.

Although the HOD Society has 147 rabbis who carry its organ donor card, the HOD Society is mainly an educational organization and does not decide, nor issue, psak halacha. As such, there is no need to restrict board membership to Rabbis.

The purpose of our two-day seminar at the Albert Einstein Medical School was to have rabbis and physicians learn about brain-stem death from both a medical and Halachic perspective. Physicians are not always familiar with Jewish law, and Rabbinic sages are not always familiar with medicine. In this respect, the seminar was extremely successful in sharing information between these two communities. The seminar lectures are available in both audio and video format at www.hods.org.

ROBBY BERMAN
Founder & Director
Halachic Organ
Donor Society

Brain-Stem Death & the Halachic Organ Donor Society

To the Editor:

Dr. Leon Zacharowitz (Brain Death is Not the Final Word, Op-Ed 11/17/06) is correct in noting that Jewish sages are divided about whether or not brain-stem death is halachic death. That is why the Halachic

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