Ever pass by the magazine rack at a drug store and wonder, “How is it that she has six pack abs? She just had a baby two months ago!” Or, “That diet supplement must really work; that model can’t be more than 80 pounds soaking wet.”

Maybe sometimes you buy the product advertised, banking on whatever revolutionary technology and empty promises advertised, or on your less optimistic days, you realize that none of them work the way they say they will and pick the least objectionable option. Either way, your choice is probably based on whatever painted and retouched photograph of a model is slapped on the package.

The good news is that there is a bill in Arizona that might help. The bill would require advertisers to put a disclaimer on the advertisement that the featured photograph has been altered or manipulated.

The actual disclaimer would read, “Postproduction techniques were made to alter the appearance in this advertisement. When using this product, similar results may not be achieved.” If passed, the bill would be the first of its kind in the United States.

The bad news is that the bill is not likely to pass. Introduced by Democrats in Arizona, the bill follows a failed venture in Britain to pass a similar law where it was halted due to backlash from the advertising industry. If it can’t work there, it definitely isn’t going to work here where, I daresay, our politicians are even more wrapped around so many fingers (remember SOPA, anyone?).

The vice president for Public Affairs of the American Advertising Federation argued that such a law could disallow any Photoshopping, manipulation, or other special effects that have nothing to do with “enhancements.”

I think that's a load of bologna. It would not disallow it. It would simply require some truth in advertising in the form of some fine print. Further, I don't think our lawmakers are so inept that they couldn't include a clause that specified which types of enhancements must be acknowledged with a disclaimer.

First and foremost, I think this is a simple issue of consumer protection. If advertisers are going to try to sell a bra by photo shopping an A cup to look like she's got DDs, that's false advertising. Or if a hair product advertises with a woman whose hair movements are more computer-generated imagery than actual hair, they are manipulating consumers. That's right L'Oreal, I know that Sarah Jessica Parker's hair doesn't really look like that!

Further, I think that this law could really help young women with body image issues. For this reason, I would advocate that the disclaimer not be limited to advertisements, but be extended to the labels of the products themselves (if they include a manipulated photograph), and maybe certain magazine covers or billboards.

It's not right that preteens and teenagers are still watching Selena Gomez on the Disney channel, and then pass by her cover picture on Cosmopolitan magazine looking like an airbrushed, Photoshopped bombshell when they may be too young to realize that it took four hours of hair and makeup to make her look like that, and then probably another eight hours in the editing room.

The truth is, I think we all probably know that these images aren't real, but some confirmation would make consumer decisions easier, and make us feel better.

Questions or comments to Abby's column can be sent to: dvagcause@exchange.ilstu.edu.