

Written Testimony of David Horn, policy student at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work and intern at the Connecticut Citizen Action Group, before the Connecticut General Assembly Education Committee, February 23, 2009, Testimony in Support of:

**House Bill No. 6496: An Act Concerning Green Cleaning in Schools**

I testify in support of House Bill No. 6496. My testimony is inspired by knowing that my father, who is a professor of linguistics at Yale University, is in remission from non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL), a form of cancer which has recently been evidenced to be spurred on by, or in part caused by, chlorinated and carbon tetrachloride organic cleaning solvents. This year the American Journal of Epidemiology published a report finding that an exposure to chlorinated solvents increased NHL risk in women by 40 percent, while carbon tetrachloride exposure more than doubled the risk.

Today Yale University has a green cleaning program, but my father could have been exposed to organic cleaning solvents which effect NHL at some time during his 30 years at Yale. In the aforementioned report Zheng and his colleagues note that NHL incidence has risen by about 3% to 4% annually since the early 1970s and past research has found an increased risk of NHL in occupations where people may be exposed to organic solvents--for example, pesticide application, dry cleaning, and embalming. This tells me that there is a health risk in educational facilities which do not have best practices established for cleaning and construction work.

In Connecticut, environmentally preferable products certified by an independent third-party organization (such as Green Seal or EcoLogo) must be procured and used in state owned buildings, and CT State Vocational Technical Schools must comply with this law. However, public schools, elementary schools, and secondary schools are not included. I support the positions of the Connecticut Foundation for Environmentally Safe Schools. That group will be providing the detailed comments about the bill language.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

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