

**SB 919 An Act Phasing Out the Use of Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers  
Environment Committee  
March 2, 2009**

**Testimony of  
Martha Kelly  
57 Curtiss Street  
Harford, CT 06106**

**I would like to thank the Environment Committee for raising this bill and allowing me an opportunity to testify in favor of SB 919. I am a resident of Hartford and a grandmother of two little girls. I urge you to act favorably on this bill for the sake of the health of present and future citizens of Connecticut.**

**Polybrominated DiPhenyl Ethers are very close chemically to PCBs and they are used industrially as flame retardants. PCBs are one of the few chemicals which the federal government has taken action to try to eliminate from our environment. The Federal government has spent millions of dollars trying to clean them out of our rivers. This is a difficult job. Prevention would be a more sensible course of action.**

**PBDEs persist in the environment, like PCBs, and also in our bodies. They are concentrated in the fat of fish and animals and in humans. For this reason they are found in the breast milk of mothers in the US. I think that it is wrong that our government allows this to happen. In Sweden, where they have taken action to eliminate PBDE's, women's breast milk is not contaminated with this chemical.**

**PBDEs come in several forms. The US EPA brokered a voluntary elimination of the Penta and Octa form of these chemicals some years ago. The trouble with this is that the remaining form, known as "Deca" breaks down into the more toxic forms (Penta and Octa ) while the material is exposed to sunlight in streams and other waterways. Contrary to what the well funded chemical industry lobbyists may tell you, these chemicals are NOT eliminated by water treatment facilities.**

**PBDEs are linked by medical studies to a variety of chronic illnesses including cancer, thyroid disorders, birth defects, and attention deficit disorder.**

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**There are excellent materials on alternative materials and strategies for preventing and retarding fires in consumer products in the publications of the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production. Please see their web site at <http://www.sustainableproduction.org/>**

**The European Union and a number of US states have taken action to protect citizens from these chemicals. Please add Connecticut to their number.**

**I want to know that my couch, my mattress, my TV, my computer, and my car to not contain these dangerous and unnecessary chemicals. I also want to be sure that my grandchildren and their future children will not suffer from the toxic legacy of using them.**

**Thank you,**

**Martha Kelly  
57 Curtiss Street  
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