

**Written Testimony of Steven Schrag of Connecticut Council on Occupational Safety and Health Before the Connecticut General Assembly Environment Committee**

February 23, 2011.

Testimony in Support of:

**Senate Bill 210, AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF BISPHENOL-A IN THERMAL RECEIPT PAPER AND INCREASING THE DUTIES OF THE CHEMICAL INNOVATIONS INSTITUTE**

Dear Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and honorable members of the Environment Committee,

**My name is Steven Schrag and I am a resident of Waterbury and a member of the Connecticut Council on Occupational Safety and Health, a coalition that brings together unions, occupational health professionals and injured workers focused on reducing workplace hazards and protecting workers rights.**

I am in writing because I strongly support SB 210 An Act Prohibiting the Use of Bisphenol-A In Thermal Receipt Paper And Increasing the Duties Of The Chemical Innovations Institute.

**I am concerned about toxic chemicals in products we and our children use every day, like receipts!**

BPA, a known endocrine disruptor, is used in many thermal paper receipts! This BPA is unbound and easily transmits to hands and into our skin. BPA has been connected to serious diseases including breast and prostate cancers, reproductive disorders, obesity and insulin resistance, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. We need to limit our exposure to BPA, particularly in something like receipts that we often touch every single day. My teenage son worked in a Dunkin Donuts and I travel over 30,000 miles every year so we both have had much contact with these potentially toxic pieces of paper.

I am concerned about the research that shows the harmful effects of exposure to these chemicals. Much scientific research links exposure to chemicals in consumer products to diseases such as cancers, diabetes, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's as well as asthma, reproductive disorders and learning and behavioral disabilities. This is especially alarming when latest statistics show that many of these diseases are on

the rise. For example, the incidence of childhood cancer, specifically leukemia and brain cancer increased by more than 20% between 1975 and 1990, 1 out of 2 men, and 1 out of 3 women will be diagnosed with invasive cancer, and autism has seen a ten-fold increase in just over fifteen years. The President's Cancer Panel Report (2010) stated that exposure to toxic chemicals is a risk factor for cancer and this exposure has been grossly underestimated. Young children and developing fetuses are especially vulnerable, as we now know that the timing of exposure, rather than the amount of exposure, is critical. Analysis of umbilical cord blood on babies born in the U.S. found over 287 chemicals including carcinogens, pesticides, and industrial chemicals! Recent studies show that carcinogens like formaldehyde, perflourinated compounds and flame retardants which are neurotoxins are commonly found in children's products. There are over 50,000 chemicals in commercial use. Of the 284 that have gone through peer reviewed testing 144 are known carcinogens, 53 of these are regulated in the workplace by OSHA but only 21 are given regulations for cancer causing substances. There is too big a hole in our current system.

The European Union is in the process of phasing out hundreds of chemicals of high concern as part of their REACH legislation. Many countries are following the lead of the EU, including China, and U.S. manufacturers will have to find and use safer alternatives in order to stay competitive in the world market. While reforms to the Toxic Substances Control Act are stalled, states are increasingly working to pass legislation that protects citizens from the most harmful chemicals.

Thanks to the members of this committee, Connecticut has been a national leader in passing strong legislation to protect the health of children and the environment by phasing out lead, mercury and BPA but we cannot continue to ban one chemical at a time. SB 210 is another step in the right direction. Connecticut should again take the lead nationally to ban BPA from thermal paper receipts once a safer alternative is identified! Parents should not have to wonder whether common household products, like bedding, toys or food can linings, are damaging their children's futures! I urge you to pass SB 210.

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