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TESTIMONY RE: Committee Bill 210 AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF BISPHENOL-A IN
THERMAL RECEIPT PAPER AND INCREASING THE DUTIES OF THE CHEMICAL
INNOVATIONS INSTITUTE
Environment Committee Hearing
February 23, 2011

Good morning Senator Meyer, Representative Roy and members of the Environment Committee, Thank-you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Nurses' Association (CNA), the professional organization for registered nurses in Connecticut.

I am Mary Jane Williams Ph.D., RN current chairperson of Government Relations Committee for the Connecticut Nurses Association and professor emeritus from Central Connecticut State University. I also serve a co-chair of Policy and Advocacy for the Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments at the national level. I have practiced nursing for over 45 years and have been educating nurses in Connecticut in both the public and private sector for over 35 years.

Connecticut Nurses' Association's speaks in strong support of which would begin the phase-out of Bisphenol A (BPA)" for use of available safer alternatives.

What is BPA?

BPA is an industrial chemical best known for making polycarbonate plastic and epoxy resins. Found in hard plastic water bottles and baby bottles, coatings inside metal food and drink cans, paints, adhesives and other products. BPA is an estrogen-mimicking chemical that, in tests on animals, has been shown to interfere with the reproductive system. Because BPA, mimics the biological activity of estrogen, many scientists worry that the chemical might induce harm by perturbing hormone signaling in exposed individuals. recent studies provide reason for some concern about the potential effects of BPA on the brain, behavior, and prostate gland of fetuses, infants and children.” Indeed, a developing child — particularly a fetus or infant — faces the greatest risks from BPA (FDA).

BPA and Thermal Receipt Paper

BPA is used as a developer in some thermal receipt paper. BPA is commonly found in thermal labels, tickets and tags. Examples include supermarket labels, event tickets, airline baggage tags, etc.

Variability and Predictors of Urinary Bisphenol A Concentrations during Pregnancy, (Environ Health Perspect) have linked handling thermal receipt paper with absorption of Bisphenol A, the seemingly ubiquitous, estrogen-mimicking hormone disruptor. The studies' authors recommend that pregnant women stay away from thermal receipt paper, and wash their hands after handling it. BPA absorption is also linked to sexual dysfunction in men. Multiple studies find the highest levels of concentration of BPA in Cashiers, a job dominated by women.

Since 1950, over 82,000 chemicals have been introduced into commerce and are found in the products we use every day. Only a handful of these chemicals have been tested for safety because, under the federal Toxic Substances Control Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must prove that a chemical causes an

unreasonable risk to health before it can be regulated. As a result of this burden, EPA has only been able to regulate five of these chemicals.

In the last several years significant amount of independent research demonstrates that many of these chemicals are carcinogens, neurotoxins and endocrine-disruptors. The issue is whether the presence of these chemicals in our bodies, particularly during critical phases of development, is associated with diseases? Significant research on Human Subjects is not available, however, animal research supports the links during critical stages of development to such as BPA.

Drs. Needleman and Landrigan, two noted researchers, stated that without knowing if exposure to these chemicals is safe, we are, by default, conducting a massive clinical toxicology trial, and our children and their children are the experimental animals.”¹ Herbert L. Needleman M.D., Philip J. Landrigan, M.D. (1994) “Raising Children Toxic Free)”

Duties of the Chemical Innovations Institute

CAN believes that the initial goals set forth for the Institute are essential to the state of Connecticut if we intend to be competitive in a Global Market place. In order to accomplish those goals the volunteers who staff the Institute must find funding a yeoman’s task in this economy. It would therefore be beneficial to adhere to the primary goals until the Institute is properly funded and utilize the Coalition as a means to bring forward lists of toxic chemicals as they are published and shared by other reputable sources.

We urge you to support this legislation related to BPA it is essential to the health of the public.