

**Written Testimony of Susan Eastwood of Ashford, CT,
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**

Good morning Senator Meyer, Representative Roy and members of the Environment Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today in support of SB 210, AN ACT PROHIBITING THE USE OF BISPHENOL-A IN THERMAL RECEIPT PAPER AND INCREASING THE DUTIES OF THE CHEMICAL INNOVATIONS INSTITUTE.

My name is Susan Eastwood. I am a resident of Ashford, CT and I work with Clean Water Action and the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut, a group of over 50 non-profits working to phase out toxic chemicals from everyday products. I am also a parent of children with asthma and allergies, which is what brought me to this work in environmental health. I talk every day with other parents and with health-affected individuals who wonder what effects chemicals of concern are having on their families. Or worse, wondering if something in a rubber duck or a sippy cup could have been the cause of their child's autism, or cancer! In many cases, we just don't know, but research findings are adding up in the case of bisphenol-A.

The chemical bisphenol-A (BPA), a known hormone disruptor that has been linked to cancer, infertility and early puberty, has been found in alarming amounts on – of all things – our money! BPA was also found on cash receipts in even higher levels. Safer Chemicals Healthy Families and the Washington Toxics Coalition tested thermal paper cash receipts and dollar bills and found that half the receipts contained large quantities of BPA, in a powdery coating which easily rubs off on our hands, our money, and presumably, anything else that we touch. Of 22 dollar bills tested, including some from Connecticut, 21 of them were contaminated with BPA. (The full report, "On the Money: BPA on Dollar Bills and Receipts", can be found at www.saferchemicals.org.) Estimated exposures for the average person could equal or exceed the amounts we ingest in our food daily. For cashiers the risk grows exponentially. Fortunately, not all thermal papers contain BPA. If safer alternatives are available, why not use them?

BPA is especially dangerous to developing children, and I am proud that Connecticut has passed the strongest law in the nation to protect young children from this dangerous chemical. The CT Departments of Public Health and of Consumer Protection issued a warning in January of 2010 to pregnant women to limit consumption of canned food and drinks because the BPA in most can linings presents a risk to their unborn child. But more action is needed to protect all of us from unavoidable exposure to BPA in our daily lives. The high levels of unbound BPA on thermal receipt papers are a shocking example

of how impossible it is to shop ourselves out of this problem. I encourage the legislature to act quickly to phase out BPA from thermal receipt papers!

BPA is just one example of many toxins found in our everyday products. Many studies have linked toxins to diseases such as cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's as well as asthma, infertility and learning disabilities. Young children and developing fetuses are especially vulnerable; exposure to even a small amount can affect a child for life. Last year, the President's Cancer Panel Report¹ stated that exposure to toxic chemicals is a serious risk factor for many cancers and called for urgent reform of ineffective chemical laws. Strengthening the Chemical Innovations Institute is a good step towards achieving that goal in Connecticut. This year, 30 states are introducing legislation on BPA or other toxics reform. Passing **SB 210** will help lead the nation forward on this important issue.

I would like to thank the Environment Committee for their leadership in this area. Please make passing **SB 210** a priority this legislative session. I will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you,

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