

March 1, 2012

Honorable Senators and Representatives,

My name is Sangeeta Thapa. I am a first year MSW student at the University of Connecticut, School of Social Work where my studies are focused on Community Organizing.

I am here today to testify on Bill # 5218, "An act concerning toxic fire retardants in children's products".

As a mother of a 4 year old son, I was devastated when I learned that the car-seat I chose for my baby, which I thought was the safest on the market, as well as the crib where he sleeps was treated with toxic fire retardant.

Faced with this information, I decided to do my own mini research and was dumbfounded when I found that 80% of children's products are treated with this toxic chemical. As I continued reading, I learned that this chemical, "Tris", not only could cause cancer, but could have reproductive or neurological effects, as well.

I wondered how many times he had touched his toy dinosaur or tried to bite it not knowing the danger hidden in its attractive bright green plastic form.

I started to question myself. Why? Why did I buy such things for him? Why was I not proactive enough to find out more about what I was buying?

After those moments of agony, I started to calm down thinking. How could have I known? And I wondered how many parents and care givers still didn't know about it? It is outrageous to know that such hazards even exist in children's product.

I know I cannot stop my son from wanting to play with his favorite toys. Then again, after knowing this underlying danger, I won't be able to give him what he wants either. If I could only remove those toxic hazards from his favorite toys! If Only! I know it is impossible for me to do this. But you, as public officials, CAN ban the use of toxic fire retardants in children's products!

So, today I am here to call on you to take action by banning the use of toxic fire retardants in children's products. As you listen to me today, one of YOUR precious little ones might be absorbing this toxin.

Banning Tris will help save lives by eliminating this health risk.

NY has already identified the dangers of Tris by passing the Tris-Free Children and Babies Act last year. Now it is our turn and only you can make Tris free products possible for our children in Connecticut.

I hope that you will agree with me that the cost of banning Tris is a small cost to save innocent lives. Please put children's lives first by passing this bill.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to present my voice. I would be very happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,



Sangeeta Thapa
MSW First Year Student
UCONN School of Social Work