



**Written Testimony of Susan Eastwood of Clean Water Action,
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Select Committee on Children,
March 1, 2012**

Testimony in Support of:
**HB 5218, AN ACT CONCERNING TOXIC FIRE RETARDANTS IN
CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS**

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Urban and honorable members of the Select Committee on Children,

My name is Susan Eastwood. I represent 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 can also speak to this issue as a parent of two.

Clean Water Action and the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut support HB 5218 An Act Concerning Toxic Flame Retardants in Children's Products.

There are several variations of "chlorinated tris" flame retardants, including TDCCP, TCEP and TCPP. Both TCEP and TDCPP have recently been listed by the California EPA as mutagenic and possible human carcinogens. TCEP is used in foam, PVC and electronics and it has been shown to cause tumors in lab animals. It is no longer produced in Europe and is under consideration to be banned in Canada after being identified as a health risk. TDCCP is used widely in furniture and automobile foam cushioning. TDCPP has not been fully tested for safety but research shows that it is carcinogenic, may disrupt hormone levels and is likely neurotoxic. TDCPP was banned from children's pajamas in the 1970's when it was found to be a probable human carcinogen. It has now shown up in many other children's products including nursing pillows, changing pads, and bassinets at concentrations of up to 5 percent by weight. And it is found in our house dust, indoor air and water.

The Coalition for a Safe and Healthy CT recently participated in a national study which tested common items from the nursery for chlorinated tris. Of 20 items tested, 18 contained at least one form of tris, including the two items purchased in Connecticut. The report "Hidden Hazards in the Nursery", released on January 19, 2012, is attached to my testimony.

Certainly, the goal of fire prevention is a good one but it can be accomplished more effectively in other ways. Proven ways of reducing fire-related deaths include fire-safe cigarettes, sprinklers, smoke detectors and enforcement of building codes. Other flame retarding materials may be used in place of foam; wool is a natural flame retardant and is already used in baby products marketed as safer. There are other chemical flame retardants that are safer alternatives as well.

As a parent I must ask how it is possible that we have found a chemical to be of such high concern that we banned it from children's pajamas but left it in items that children sleep, play and nurse on. To me, this indicates not a lack of intent, but a lack of the proper tools to allow us to make the needed changes in our regulations in order to protect the most vulnerable of our population. Because the Federal Toxic Substances Control Act is so weak, and Congress has yet to act to reform this broken law, there are many failures to protect our youth. This is a tragic situation which we can begin to address here in Hartford. I am proud that you, our state legislators, have chosen to be leaders in banning some of the most egregious chemicals from children's products and I hope that you will continue to move toward a safer, healthier Connecticut by passing HB 5218 this session.

In conclusion, we feel that this bill is an important step to protect our children from toxic chlorinated tris flame retardants in children's products.

We urge your support of HB 5218. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Susan Eastwood

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