

Testimony for Public Hearing  
Public Health Committee  
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**SB 274--An Act Concerning Chemicals of High Concern to Children**

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and other distinguished committee members, I want to thank you for this opportunity to address SB 274.

I urge you to pass this important legislation that would help to identify and protect my family, and Connecticut families, from chemicals that are toxic and can cause a multitude of disease processes. I am a nurse and mother of a 2 year old daughter. I am also pregnant with my second child. I believe that this bill presents reform that is critical to the health of my children and I am proud to sit here today to support it.

The journey to understand and protect my family from toxic chemical exposure began with my first pregnancy. I am fortunate to have a medically based education and access to quality research; which I have used to gain knowledge on this subject. I discovered multiple peer reviewed studies that have been done, which showed that over 200 chemicals were found in placental blood and breast milk. I have also read research-based studies which link exposure to chemicals with asthma, insulin resistance, endocrine and reproductive disorders, and even cancer. Also, cancer is now the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common cause of death in the U.S. for people under 20. After finding all this I decided that I would do whatever it took to protect my baby daughter.

Protecting her from exposure to toxins has been an arduous process. I have had to research products to purchase safer alternatives, which has taken an extensive amount of time and money. The search for “safe” products has included everything from monitoring what I was exposed to while I was pregnant, to every item in her nursery, all her toys and our personal care products. This means that I have read every label on every product and have done my best to decipher that information. And despite all my education and effort, I know that I am only able to reduce the chemical burden on her body and not free her of it.

As a nurse I believe in the Precautionary Principle, which is a policy that urges prevention of disease and precaution in the face of scientific uncertainty. I recognize that the average citizen is unaware of the hidden exposures to toxic chemicals in their homes so it is my responsibility to advocate for them. There are over 82,000 chemicals that are unregulated and have not been tested for safety. Federally we have the Toxic Substances Control Act that has not been updated since 1976. As healthcare costs rise, it is imperative that some action be taken to address the impact of exposure to toxins on long-term health, and especially in children as they are the most vulnerable. I have been a home care nurse for several years now and have seen how financial disparities can limit the choices a person makes when buying any product. That is why it is so important that legislation be passed to

protect ALL citizens from harmful toxins. There are already some safer alternatives available for children's products but as it stands it truly is a matter of the have and have-nots. The problem with this is that Connecticut pays a high cost for the care of those with chronic disease and cancers; and especially for those on Medicaid.

I hope that Connecticut will continue to champion legislation to protect my children and my patients. I want them to have the hope of clean air to breathe and a safe environment to play in. Connecticut mothers and residents need your help to make the products we purchase and the homes we live in, safe and healthy. I look forward to legislation that will help guide me by providing an expert panel to review the latest research and identify chemicals of harm.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue and your commitment to the health of Connecticut's residents. I urge your support of this bill.

Sincerely,

Hacah Boros, RN, BSN