

Written Testimony of Nadine Fraser, MD of Suffield, CT
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Committee on Public Health,
March 7, 2012

Testimony in Support of:
SB 274, AN ACT CONCERNING CHEMICALS OF
HIGH CONCERN TO CHILDREN

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and honorable members of the Committee on Public Health.

I am a physician trained in Russia currently working on my Masters of Public Health at the Yale School of Public Health. I am a US citizen and a CT resident for over 13 years. My professional interest is in the field of Women's Health. I am appearing today to lend my support to this bill. As a mother of a 10 year old girl, I am deeply concerned about the risks that children are facing on a daily basis due to exposure to multiple potentially toxic chemicals present in every day products. There are currently over 82,000 chemicals used in the manufacture of products; unfortunately most of these chemicals have never been tested for safety to the general public and especially to children; and with the current stalemate in Washington, states must take the leadership role. Certain chemicals have been linked in clinical research studies to the increased incidence of environmentally induced cancer and other medical conditions in children such as autism, ADHD, asthma and the birth defects. As an example, incidence of birth defect in boys resulting in undescended testis have increased at least two fold since 1970. There is total consensus that certain stages of human development, including in-utero, infancy, and early childhood, are most vulnerable to the negative effects of environmental exposure to

chemicals. To date studies have been limited to a relatively narrow spectrum of chemicals such as lead, cadmium, mercury, BPA, so on, leaving other potentially just as dangerous substances out of the scope of the attention of the scientific community and the general public. This bill will give us the opportunity to identify particular chemicals found in consumer products, to study the effects of these chemicals and to provide awareness to consumers via effective labeling. Understandably, we can not get rid of all chemicals but we can strive to mitigate the negative effects for at very least the most vulnerable groups, including young children, as the SB 274 act is proposing. Implementing this act longterm will likely decrease the burden of enviromental-related illnesses in children, reduce the stress these illnesses put on families, while decreasing the health care cost. These benefits can be achieved without any additional cost to taxpayers. The State of Maine passed a similar piece of legislature - the "Kid Safe Product Act" with no fiscal note. Connecticut can similarly pass bill number SB 274 and continue to be a leader among States when it comes to environment policy, public health and children's safety.