

Testimony in Support of SB 274
An Act Concerning Chemicals of High Concern to Children

March 7, 2012

Dear Senator Gerrantana, Representative Ritter and honorable members of the Committee on Public Health:

My name is Rhonda Sherwood and I live in Darien CT. I am here because I strongly support **SB 274**, An Act Concerning Chemicals of High Concern to Children.

I am the mother of three children and also the vice chairman of the executive board of the Mount Sinai Children's Environmental Health Center in New York (www.cehcenter.org), working under Dr. Philip Landrigan who is a pediatrician and chairman of the department of Preventive Medicine at Mount Sinai.

I am here because too many children in my town and neighboring communities are suffering from diseases- autism, ADHD, pediatric cancers, asthma and obesity- that were virtually unheard of in my generation. I think something is terribly wrong when a 9 year old boy from Darien dies of a brain tumor in July 2008 (www.jrschoen.org) only to have another boy, this one 11 and from New Canaan, die from a brain tumor two months later (www.mikeyczec.org) Statistics from the National Cancer Institute and the Centers for Disease Control support my observations:

- Childhood brain cancers and leukemia, the two most common forms of pediatric cancer, have increased in incidence by approximately 40% since the 1970s
- One out of every 110 children born in the US- one out of every 70 boys and one out of every 360 girls- will be diagnosed with some form of autism.
- The incidence of testicular cancer, a young man's disease, has increased by over 50% since the 1970s
- Childhood asthma rates have tripled over the past three decades.

When children die from cancer or suffer from life-long disabilities such as ADHD or autism, Mother Nature is waving a very sad, disease-ridden red flag crying for help.

So how do we help? We need to eliminate the chemicals found in products in our everyday world that are causing harm. I'm not just talking about a factory spewing toxins into the air and groundwater, I'm talking about chemicals in food packaging and artificial fragrances in the perfumes targeted to little girls and carcinogenic flame retardants bio accumulating in my sons' bodies, thanks to the mattress on which they sleep.

During my six years working with Dr. Landrigan at Mount Sinai, I have learned that peer reviewed medical research is revealing a link between exposure to toxic chemicals and human health, especially in young children and unborn fetuses. Good science is available now and a Green Ribbon Panel dedicated to vetting toxic chemicals can only be a good thing.

I know that lobbyists from the toy, grocer and chemical industries will argue that federal standards are good enough and jobs will be lost if this bill passes. I believe your decision should not be based on supporting a perverse economy where harmful chemicals create factory jobs now and health care jobs to take care of sick kids later. The evidence for passage of SB 274 lies in the barometer of our children's health, which is steadily declining. And if that doesn't convince you, the fact that our country spends an estimated \$76.6 billion on childhood disease induced by the environment should (Source: **Reducing the Staggering Costs of Environmental Disease in Children, Estimated at \$76.6 Billion in 2008**, Leonardo Trasande, MD MPP, *Health Affairs*)

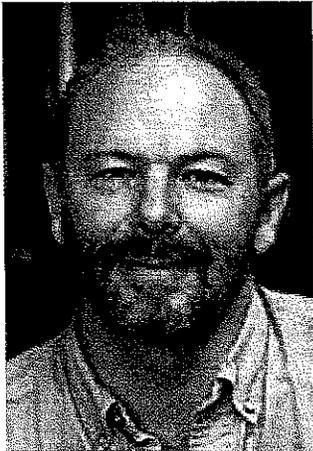
Help us preserve the health of our children by voting in favor of SB 274.

Thank you.



Introducing Guest Lecturer Michael K. Skinner, PhD

Inaugural Derald H. Ruttenberg Visiting Professor in Endocrine Disruption and Children's Health



Michael K. Skinner, PhD is a reproductive biologist and Professor in the School of Biological Sciences at Washington State University. His research examines how different cell types interact and communicate to regulate growth in the male reproductive organs. Most recently, his research has demonstrated that endocrine disruptors - toxic chemicals commonly found in plastics, cosmetics, and personal care products - have the ability to promote disease across multiple generations.

Dr. Skinner's work has been featured in the PBS and BBC documentary *Ghost in Your Genes*, which shows how our genes are shaped by our ancestor's life experiences. In 2005 and 2007, Dr. Skinner's research was selected as top 100 discoveries by Discover Magazine.

Dr. Skinner has also established one of the largest reproductive sciences research centers in the world (the Center for Reproductive Biology at Washington State University/University of Idaho), published over 200 peer-reviewed papers, delivered over 180 lectures and seminars, and has been involved in the start-up of several biotechnology companies.

Children's Environmental Health Center
Mount Sinai School of Medicine
One Gustave L. Levy Place, Box 1057
New York, NY 10029
www.cehcenter.org
212-824-7125

**Mount
Sinai**

Children's
Environmental
Health Center

Announcing the first Derald H. Ruttenberg Visiting Professorship
in Endocrine Disruption and Children's Health

GHOSTS in Your Genome?

Learn how environmental chemicals
can reprogram your genes.

Tuesday, April 3, 2012 • 5:30 pm

Mount Sinai Medical Center, Goldwurm Auditorium
1425 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10029

Featuring guest lecturer

Michael K. Skinner, PhD

Professor, School of Biological Sciences, Washington State University

And a panel discussion with

Philip J. Landrigan, MD, MSc and Shanna H. Swan, PhD

This is a free event.

To RSVP, visit www.cehcenter.org or email katherine.southwick@mssm.edu