



*Connecticut Chapter*  
*645 Farmington Ave.*  
*Hartford, Connecticut 06105*  
[www.connecticut.sierraclub.org](http://www.connecticut.sierraclub.org)  
Martin Mador, Legislative Chair

Public Health Committee  
March 7, 2012

Testimony In Support of  
SB 274 AAC Chemicals Of High Concern To Children

I am Martin Mador, 130 Highland Ave., Hamden, CT 06518. I am the volunteer Legislative Chair for the Sierra Club-Connecticut Chapter. I hold a Masters of Environmental Management degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

I'm here today because the Sierra Club believes the intentional introduction of toxics into our environment is very much an environmental issue.

Chemical policy in the US for a century seems to be guided by the legal caution principle. That is, use any chemical you want until the risk of legal liability becomes too great. The federal Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) is universally regarded as a failure. In 40 years, just a handful of the 80,000 chemicals in commercial use have been recognized as toxins and banned. Expectations that the current Congress in Washington will pass protective legislation are rock bottom.

There is growing consensus, based on sound medical and scientific research, that exposure to toxic chemicals in consumer products is a significant risk factor for disease. Statistics on the link between chemical exposures and disease abound. I'm sure many of the people testifying today will provide them. Here is just one: cancer is now the 2nd leading cause of death in the US- - - - for people under 20.

We are, very slowly, moving to adopt the precautionary principle. That is, when we have enough evidence to be confident that a chemical is dangerous, then we should stop using it and find a safe alternative. Putting the health of consumers at risk to boost corporate profits was for a century an accepted practice. But no longer.

I expect that manufacturers of children's products will be here today vigorously trying to convince you to vote against this bill. I'm just dumbfounded. This bill doesn't ban anything. It doesn't give anyone the power to ban anything. It doesn't create new agency regulation. It asks the agencies to collect information on what's dangerous to children, to assemble a list, and report back to the legislature. That's all it does. And, it doesn't impose *any* costs on business, as the responsibility for the work rests with the agencies and the Commission.

So we're asking the state to help advise manufacturers on chemicals they should avoid in products destined for kids. I'm sure they would say "of course we want to make safe products. Keeping our customers safe and healthy is job one". So we are doing their research for them. We are helping them to find out what should be avoided. And it creates clarity for the manufacturers-here's what all of you should avoid.

How could they possibly be against that?

This legislature in recent years has become very protective of the health of our citizens. We have passed a number of bills whose purpose is to limit the exposure of our fellow residents and citizens to toxics. This is one of the reasons we are so proud of the bipartisan legislative process in Connecticut—truly a model for the country.

SB 274 is another step along the way. The Sierra Club recommends adoption.