



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

## **TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE Feb 21, 2013**

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### **House Bill 5908 – An Act Requiring Safety and Certification Standards For The Spray Foam Insulation Industry**

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The Connecticut Department of Public Health opposes H.B. 5908.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health recognizes that there are potential health and safety hazards associated with spray polyurethane foam insulation (SPF). These hazards have been described by NIOSH, OSHA, CPSC, and EPA<sup>1</sup>, and pertain to both installers and their helpers, as well as for household/building occupants that inhabit the building where SPF is installed. Many of these installations are performed without subsequent problems. However, a number of cases of faulty installations have resulted in improperly cured product that off-gas for many months. In these cases, building occupants report noxious odors and symptoms that include mucous membrane irritation, visual disturbances, respiratory problems, headache, and difficulty concentrating. Some of the problems identified during these faulty installations have included use of the wrong type of foam product for a given application, improper mixing of components, installing during environmental climate conditions outside of manufacturer recommendations, and improper installation technique.

Installers and the general public purchasing these services need to be better educated about SPF. Currently, there are national efforts to voluntarily educate and credential/certify professional installers. The largest trade organizations offer training and certification or credentialing for professional contractors and weatherization professionals, as well as information for the general public. The two most prominent organizations are the American Chemistry Council's Center for the Polyurethane Industry (CPI) and the Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance (SPFA). Additionally, the US EPA has a great deal of guidance and informative publications for contractors and the general public, and is sponsoring research in this arena.

- CPI: <http://spraypolyurethane.org/spf-chemical-health-and-safety-training>
- SPFA: <http://www.sprayfoam.org/>
- US EPA: [http://www.epa.gov/dfepubs/projects/spf/spray\\_polyurethane\\_foam.html](http://www.epa.gov/dfepubs/projects/spf/spray_polyurethane_foam.html)

Rather than requiring Connecticut to develop standards for the SPF industry, a more practical approach would be to encourage persons installing SPF to obtain training, certification or credentialing from CPI, SPFA, or similar organization.

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Developing standards for installing SPF for the entire industry is beyond the resources and area of expertise of CT DPH. Our public health role is better suited to identifying and evaluating health risks and providing risk communication to help the public make informed choices about using these materials in CT homes/buildings.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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<sup>1</sup> Governmental agency acronyms:

NIOSH- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/>

OSHA- Occupational Safety and Health Administration. <http://www.osha.gov/>

CPSC- Consumer Product Safety Commission. <http://www.cpsc.gov/>

EPA- Environmental Protection Agency. <http://www.epa.gov/>

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