



Planned Parenthood of Southern New England

Testimony of Gretchen Raffa, Director, Public Policy & Advocacy
Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, Inc
In support of *House Bill 6332, AN ACT CONCERNING TOXIC FIRE RETARDANTS IN
CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS*

Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and honorable members of the Committee on Children, my name is Gretchen Raffa, from Planned Parenthood of Southern New England testifying in support of *HB 6332 An Act Concerning Toxic Fire Retardants in Children's Products*. Planned Parenthood of Southern New England's mission is to protect the right of all individuals to control their own fertility. Over the past decade new studies continue to demonstrate that environmental contaminants and exposure to chemicals can have a detrimental effect on one's reproductive health. As a trusted provider of reproductive health care to over 65,000 patients every year we are committed to educating ourselves and patients about the dangers and health risks from exposure to chemicals for women, men and their families.

Carcinogenic flame retardants have no place in children's products. Chlorinated Tris flame retardants, including TDCPP, TCEP and TCPP, are highly toxic chemicals added to the polyurethane foam of many products. Their presence is particularly worrisome in children's products. Toxic chemical exposure during critical windows of fetal development and to young infants and children is of particular concern. TDCPP was banned from children's pajamas in the 1970's when it was found to be mutagenic, meaning that it causes changes to DNA in the cells which can lead to cancers of the kidneys, liver and testicles. It is also a hormone disruptor and a neurotoxin.

A recent human epidemiology study found that men living in homes with high amounts of TDCPP in household dust had reduced sperm counts and altered levels of hormones related to fertility and thyroid function. TPP was shown to be associated with substantial reductions in sperm concentrations and an increase in prolactin levels (a marker of decreased neuro-endocrine activity) in men.¹

Planned Parenthood of Southern New England is committed to promoting reproductive justice and we have long fought for a woman's right to control her reproductive destiny and plan her family. We have a growing concern that the complexities of a woman's environment, including her physical geography, race, class, access to healthcare to name a few, can play a debilitating role on her fertility. This is why we have turned our attention to chemicals of concerns and reproductive toxicants that are affecting the ability of women to plan their families.

The time is now to reduce exposure to women, men and children. Reducing exposure to chemicals is a family planning issue for women and men and chemicals such as chlorinated Tris that can have an effect on fertility are a critical health issue. We urge you to support *HB 6332 An Act Concerning Toxic Fire Retardants in Children's Products*. We at Planned Parenthood of Southern New England believe this is an urgent matter of reproductive justice. All women should be guaranteed the right to control their own fertility, to have healthy babies and live in safe and healthy communities. Thank you.

¹ REGULATORY POLICY LEADING TO HALOGENATED FLAME RETARDANTS IN FURNITURE AND BABY PRODUCTS: FIRE SAFETY AND HEALTH CONCERNS <http://greensciencepolicy.org/sites/default/files/4502.pdf>