

**Written Testimony of Pamela Puchalski,  
of the Connecticut Council on Occupational Safety and Health  
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Committee on Children  
in support of HB 6332 February 21, 2013**

**Good Afternoon Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, and members of the Committee on Children. My name is Pamela Puchalski and I am the Project Coordinator for the Connecticut Council on Occupational Safety and Health, a labor affiliated organization which focuses on health and safety in the workplace. I am submitting testimony to ask that you support HB 6332 An act concerning toxic fire retardants in children's products.**

**Although the banning of products containing Tris for children less than three years of age and their parents is not specifically a workplace health and safety issue, it is precedent setting because these toxic chemicals that were voluntarily removed from use in children's clothes because they were known to be carcinogenic are still being used in childrens' products. These products, which are specifically designed for daily and frequent use by young children and their parents, include such items as nap pads, car seats, nursing pillows, changing pads, and mattresses. Common sense would dictate that if the variations of chlorinated Tris flame retardants are carcinogenic in certain products that come in contact with infants and young children, then they would likewise be carcinogenic in the other products that come in contact with them especially as they off-gas into the air and settle into house dust.**

**Also disturbing is the evidence that these chlorinated Tris flame retardants do not provide a significant fire safety benefit. Studies have demonstrated that ignition of polyurethane foam products containing the flame retardants is only delayed by a few seconds and that is in studies where a small flame is placed under or near the foam. It does not demonstrate what would actually happen in a situation where the foam product is in a full fledged fire. Once ignited, the flame retardants actually create a darker smoke which is highly toxic to both the individuals fleeing from the fire and those responders who arrive to put it out. This, of course, leads to the question of whether there is an actual benefit of using these flame retardants in products when there are demonstrated hazards.**

**Besides being potentially carcinogenic, the different variations of chlorinated Tris have also been linked to a variety of nervous system impairments such as seizures, memory loss, and learning problems. Early research shows that they may disrupt hormone levels and are neurotoxic. Although no human studies have been conducted as of yet, evidence against TDCPP, one of the Tris variations, is suggesting that it may impact fertility by influencing hormone levels and semen quality in men (1).**

**It is important to remember that these infants and young children who we desperately want to keep safe from any harm ultimately grow up to be teens, young adults, workers,**

parents and maybe even grandparents. What we allow them to be exposed to now in their highly vulnerable state may well be setting them up for health problems in their adult life. Is it possible that exposure to these flame retardants could ultimately preclude them to learning disabilities, being unable to conceive a child, developing cancer, or some type of Senile Dementia? The answer to this question is yes and it is because of this that I ask you to support HB 6332 and ban any product containing any variation of Tris and marketed for use for children under the age of three and for their parents and guardians.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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