

**Written Testimony of Chris Corcoran, Coalition for a Safe and Healthy CT,
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Committee on Children,
March 5th, 2013.**

Testimony in Support of:

RB 6526 The Toxic Disclosure and Innovation for Healthy Children Act

Dear Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and honorable members of the Committee on Children,

My name is Chris Corcoran and I am a resident of West Hartford CT and a proud member of the Coalition for a Safe & Healthy Connecticut (CSHC). I am submitting testimony in strong support of RB 6526. I will keep this brief. There are over 83,000 chemicals in commerce today. Sixty-two thousand were grandfathered into place when the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) was enacted with little or no safety testing. Today, only about 5% (about 200) have had any safety testing and of these, only about five have been fully regulated! One chemical, asbestos, was originally listed as a hazard, but eventually the asbestos lobby won out and it was removed from the list. Asbestos was removed from the hazardous chemical list. That fact alone should be very troubling.

Washington DC has been talking for years about how to reform TSCA. We cannot wait for DC, where partisan gridlock will choke up the process for who knows how long. Connecticut needs to act to protect the children, women and men living in Connecticut from to exposure to toxic chemicals, now!

At the same time, Connecticut can help lead a toxic chemical revolution that will find the alternatives to dangerous chemicals. Jobs will be created as the thirst for alternatives grows and the rest of the country and the world turns to Connecticut to lead the way.

In addition, replacing existing chemicals with safer alternatives will lower health care costs. As Managed Care becomes a reality under the new health care system, prevention is going to play a bigger and bigger role. As our exposure to toxic chemicals has grown over the years, so has the incidence of everything from asthma to brain cancer and leukemia. A growing body of scientific research suggests that exposure to toxic chemicals in products in our homes and in our environment is the primary suspect for the rise of many of these diseases. By reducing exposure to toxic chemicals, we can hope to reduce the prevalence of these diseases over time.

Exposure to certain chemicals has a direct impact on the achievement gap. In 2011, the Children's Environmental Health Initiative at Duke University released the results from a study of blood lead levels in children in Connecticut¹ and the impact on the Connecticut Mastery Tests after grade test scores. In the executive summary, the researchers state "In summary, early childhood lead exposure negatively affected Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) scores in reading and math." Downstream costs of the special education and attention those children with lead poisoning requires runs in the millions. Reduce exposure early, and you save money later.

I urge this committee to pass RB 6526 The Toxic Disclosure and Innovation for Healthy Children Act out of committee and prioritize this bill for passage into law this session. Connecticut children benefit; Connecticut businesses benefits; Connecticut's health care system benefits; Connecticut's education system benefits; and we all breathe and live a healthier life. Sounds like a winning proposition to me.

Thank you for this opportunity. I urge this committee to strongly support RB 6526.

Sincerely,

Chris Corcoran

Chris Corcoran
96 Quaker Lane North
West Hartford CT, 06119
860-523-4979

¹ Miranda, M., Kim, D., Osgood, C., Hastings, D. (2011, Feb. 5). The Impact of Early Childhood Lead Exposure on Educational Test Performance Among Connecticut School Children, Phase 1, Report. Retrieved from http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/student/health/linking_lead_and_education_data.pdf