

RB 6526 -Toxics Disclosure and Innovation for Healthy Children

I would like to thank the members of the Children's Committee for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Joe Wasserman and I am a community organizer with Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice. I am here to testify in favor of RB 6526-Toxics Disclosure and Innovation for Healthy Children

Did you know that fewer than 5% of the 80,000 synthetic chemicals in commerce have been reviewed for safety? Did you know that even a small exposure to toxic chemicals during fetal development can cause irreversible long-term damage and that one study found that new born infants carried as much as 200 toxic chemicals? Did you know that the products that contain these toxins are incinerated in Hartford and Bridgeport, thus giving disproportionate and greater toxic exposure to residents of low income communities of color, as these toxins are released into the air?

CT Coalition for Environmental Justice, as part of the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut, has been working to protect children's health from unnecessary toxic exposure in every day products. We worked together to pass state legislation banning Bisphenol-A, or BPA, in children's products in 2009. In 2011 we helped pass legislation to phase out BPA out of thermal receipt paper. The vast majority of non-industry funded studies have found BPA exposure, even at very low doses, to be linked with prostate and breast cancer, obesity, attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity disorder, lowered sperm count and early onset of puberty. Yet 93% of Americans have detectable levels of BPA in their bodies.

But BPA is only one of the massive number of chemicals we are exposed that have not been fully tested and may be dangerous to human health, even in small doses. To ban or phase out one chemical at a time would take over a century. Toxics Disclosure and Innovation for Healthy Children would create a process for developing a list of chemicals of concern and a plan to replace these chemicals. Connecticut should follow the example of a number of states that have already created such a process.

The Toxics Disclosure and Innovation for Healthy Children will also help open up the field of green chemistry in our state, putting Connecticut ahead of the curve in terms of job creation in this critical area.

I urge you to pass RB 6526 -Toxics Disclosure and Innovation for Healthy Children