



377 Research Parkway, Suite 2-D
Meriden, CT 06450-7160
203-238-1207

**TESTIMONY RE: TESTIMONY RE: Raised Bill No. 6526: AN ACT CONCERNING TOXICS
DISCLOSURE AND INNOVATIONS FOR HEALTHY CHILDREN**

SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

March 5, 2013

Good Afternoon, Co-Chairs, Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban and esteemed members of the Select Committee on Children. I want to thank-you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Nurses' Association (CNA), as a founding partner of the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut. I am Mary Jane Williams Ph.D., RN current chairperson of Government Relations Committee for the Connecticut Nurses Association and professor emeritus from Central Connecticut State University. I am also a founding member of the National Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments and currently serve on the Steering Committee.

I speak in strong support: **Raised Bill No. 6526: AN ACT CONCERNING TOXICS DISCLOSURE AND INNOVATIONS FOR HEALTHY CHILDREN.**

We don't know what the triggers are to the incidence of disease onset. However, we are beginning to develop a strong body of scientific knowledge that establishes cause and effect. However until we have multiple well- grounded research studies, we need to apply the Precautionary Principle which states "When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically." In this context the proponent of the activity, rather than the public, should bear the burden of the proof. The process of applying the precautionary principle must be open, informed and democratic and must include

potentially affected parties. It must involve an examination of a full range of alternatives, including no action.”(Wingspread Statement on the Precautionary Principle, Jan. 1998).

Therefore we must ask the ultimate questions:

What do we do with the knowledge we have related to chemicals in our environment?

How do we protect the public we serve with the goal of “Doing No Harm”?

Childhood Cancer: An estimated 12,060 new cases are expected to occur among children 0 to 14 years of age in 2012. Childhood cancers are rare, representing less than 1% of all new cancer Diagnoses. Overall, the childhood cancer incidence rates increased slightly by 0.5% per year from 2004 to 2008, this has been a consistent trend since 1975. An estimated 1,340 cancer deaths are expected to occur among children 0 to 14 years of age in 2012, about one-third of these from leukemia. Although uncommon, cancer is the second leading cause of death in children, exceeded only by accidents. Mortality rates for childhood cancer have declined by 66% over the past four decades, from 6.5 (per 100,000) in 1969 to 2.2 in 2008.

Our “lack of action” as a State has a direct impact on the children in our communities and their families in the immediate and long term. Chronic illness that is a result of long-term cancer treatment is traumatic for the child, family and result in long-term costs for health care. We are asking that the “Precautionary Principle” be applied and that Connecticut be proactive in banning hazardous chemicals, which are found in an array of children’s product. All of these chemicals are potentially harmful to children and their healthy development. Manufacturers of children’s products should be required to use safer alternatives. Phasing out of “Priority Chemicals” of concern is essential to the health of our children. With over 83,000 chemicals in commerce, most of which have never been tested for safety, and with efforts to reform the Toxic Substances Control Act stalled, states like CT need to move forward on “Priority Chemicals” that are bio-accumulative and very persistent.

It is our responsibility to educate the public to make safe choices for themselves and their families and to advocate for good health. In order to advocate for good health we must

eliminate exposure to chemicals and their by-products. Nurses are the largest group of health care providers nationally. Nursing practice focuses on prevention and wellness. This legislation is about protecting our children, the next generation and the public. "It is about the health of the public".

Thank you for your time. We strongly urge the committee to vote favorably to support

**Raised Bill No. 6526: AN ACT CONCERNING TOXICS DISCLOSURE AND INNOVATIONS FOR
HEALTHY CHILDREN**

Thank you

Mary Jane M. Williams PhD., RN