

Co-Chairs Danté Bartolomeo and Diana Urban and Members of the Children's Committee:

I would like to ask your support for HB 6526 AN ACT CONCERNING CHEMICALS OF HIGH CONCERN TO CHILDREN. My simple reason is that I believe toxic chemicals in our household products play a role in our health and we need to begin to take steps in Connecticut to reduce our exposure to these toxic chemicals. This belief is supported by a growing body of scientific research suggesting that exposure to toxic chemicals in products in our homes and in our environment is the number #1 suspect for the rise of many serious diseases.

My own story is puts this research in perspective. Seven years ago I was diagnosed with early stage breast cancer. There was no family history and I was in my mid-50's in otherwise good health. I had switched in the 1990's to clean greening products, I was a member of my local food coop to have access to locally grown organic food, and I exercised regularly. Recently I was diagnosed with an autoimmune disorder known as Sjögren's Syndrome.

Twenty-six years ago my daughter was born with developmental delays of unknown origin. Again there was no family history of developmental problems. Because of her needs I left paid employment as a financial analyst. My years of being a productive taxpaying citizen were cut short by more than thirty years.

That is a lot of health problems in my family when we follow good nutrition and health guidelines.

Knowing only about 5% (about 200) of the chemicals in use today have had any safety testing and of these only about five have been fully regulated, I believe there is a need to do more to identify toxic chemicals that are harming our health particularly the health of our children.

HB 6526 takes the needed step to protect our future health. It establishes a list of chemicals of high concern and identifies among these high concern chemicals two to three that are high priority. Manufacturers that sell children's products in CT are then required to disclose the presence of these high priority chemicals and to submit a Product Innovation Plan demonstrating how they will shift to a safer alternative.

Connecticut has already taken steps to regulate pesticides in schools, ban cadmium jewelry for children, and ban Bisphenol-A. Please take the next step to move Connecticut to a safer future by identifying other chemicals which harm our children's health.

Susan Zimmerman
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