



Testimony of Anne Hulick, Co-Director, CT Clean Water Action and Coordinator, Coalition for a Safe and Healthy CT, On behalf of Clean Water Action and the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut

Before the CGA General Law Committee, February 18, 2014.

Testimony in opposition to SB 84, AAC Cadmium in Children's Products

Good afternoon Senator Doyle, Representative Baram and members of the General Law Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I speak in opposition to SB 84, AAC Cadmium in Children's Products.

My name is Anne Hulick and I am the Co-Director of Clean Water Action, Coordinator of the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy CT and a nurse with many years of environmental health experience.

Connecticut is recognized nationally for taking the lead to reduce exposure to toxic chemicals in certain products that pose a high risk of harm to our most vulnerable citizens, our children. In 2010, Connecticut passed HB 5314 which restricted the level of cadmium in children's jewelry in excess of 0.0004% by weight. The bill had strong bipartisan support. Other states, including Washington, California, Minnesota and Maine have also passed restrictions on the allowable amount of cadmium in children's jewelry.

Cadmium is a heavy metal, similar to lead and mercury. It is considered "highly toxic" and identified as a human carcinogen by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. Numerous independent studies show that cadmium exposure is linked to respiratory problems, lung cancer, gastrointestinal disorders, kidney and liver problems and cardiovascular problems. If ingested, it can cause abdominal pain, cramps, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Cadmium is also a persistent, bioaccumulative toxin with a very long half-life.¹ Children's exposure is a particular concern.. "After reviewing the literature, Kjellström and Nordberg (1985) developed a from their kinetic model of between 6 and 38 years for the human kidney and between 4 and 19 years for the human

¹Weidenhamer, J. D., Miller, J., Guinn, D., & Pearson, J. (2011). Bioavailability of cadmium in inexpensive jewelry. *Environmental health perspectives*, 119(7), 1029.



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liver. These range of half-times high values indicate the persistence of cadmium in the body and the importance of minimizing exposures in children to prevent long-term accumulation and toxicity. "²

Since cadmium has a long half-life and bioaccumulates, even small exposures over time could pose a significant risk, especially to young children. I am sure you'll hear many reasons from the industry that small levels of cadmium pose no harm. My question is, Why would we risk this and why would Connecticut remove a standard that protects children, is achievable and had wide bipartisan support just a few years ago? The industry standard for testing the leaching of cadmium from jewelry does not take into account an item that is scratched or damaged and therefore, does not sufficiently address how a child might be exposed to this highly toxic chemical.

Clean Water Action and the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut urge you to reject this attempt to raise the allowable amount of cadmium in children's jewelry.

Sincerely,

Anne Hulick, RN, MS, JD

² ATSDR Toxicological Profile of Cadmium, page 185. <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/tp.asp?id=48&tid=15>