



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Committee on Children

March 6, 2014

**Commissioner Jewel Mullen, MD, MPH, MPA
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House Bill 5035 – AN ACT CONCERNING TOXIC FIRE RETARDANTS IN CHILDREN’S PRODUCTS

The Department of Public Health (DPH) provides the following information regarding House Bill 5035. The proposed bill calls for a ban of three Tris chlorophosphate flame retardants from children’s products by October 1, 2015. The group of chlorinated Tris flame retardants mentioned in the bill is associated with carcinogenic activity and damage to internal organs including male testes at high dose. The federal Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC 2006) assessed the risks from one of the chlorinated Tris retardants in the legislation, TDCPP. Its presence in children’s foam products was associated with elevated cancer and non-cancer risks as calculated by CPSC. While the data on exposure are limited, the CPSC report provides evidence that children could contact these chlorinated Tris flame retardants via inhalation and dust ingestion. Data from the 1970s indicates that this class of flame retardants can be absorbed across the skin when incorporated into children’s sleepwear as evidenced by urine biomonitoring samples. This was an important part of the evidence supporting the ban of Tris from sleepwear at that time. Recent research shows TDCPP to be common in children’s products which contain polyurethane foam, with the other targeted flame retardants, TCEP and TCPP, also detected.

In summary, this evidence shows a high potential for children’s exposure to toxic chlorinated Tris compounds in foam products that are currently on the market. Therefore, the raised bill touches on a matter of importance to children’s health. Several other states including Washington, New York, Maryland and Vermont have recently passed similar bills banning these Tris flame retardants from children’s products. An additional consideration is that manufacturers of children’s products sold in Connecticut should make known to the DPH the flame retardants that they intend to use in place of Tris at least 3 months before the change goes into effect.

While the Department of Public Health supports the concept of House Bill 5035, the responsibility of testing products and enforcing the provisions of this bill falls to the Department of Consumer Protection. DCP estimates that to do so would require the addition

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of one Product Safety Inspector and approximately \$50,000 annually in laboratory testing fees. Such resources have not been allocated in the Governor's proposed budget.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.