

Testimony of Janet Bellamy, M.Ed., OTR/L
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Children's Committee
March 6, 2014

Testimony in support of HB 5354
An Act Concerning Chemicals of High Concern to Children

To Honorable members of the Children's Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 5354, An Act Concerning Chemicals of High Concern to Children.

My name is Janet Bellamy. I am an Occupational Therapist who as a pediatric specialist works with children and their parents. I am testifying in support of HB 5354 because of my concern about how the presence of toxic chemicals in consumer and especially children's products affects the development of neurological systems. There is now a large body of scientific evidence linking exposure to toxic chemicals in consumer products, beginning in the womb, with the rise in many diseases and disorders. Research increasingly associates exposure to these chemicals with the rising incidence of many serious diseases, including childhood brain cancers and leukemia, reproductive disorders, behavioral and learning disorders, adult cancers, asthma, diabetes and even obesity. Consumers must rely on governmental regulation to protect them from unnecessary exposure to dangerous chemicals.

This is important to me because, as an Occupational Therapist who has specialized in pediatrics for the past 15 years I have seen an increasing number of children with problems that interfere with family life, play, and learning. As we learn more about the effects of toxins on developing brains, I am concerned that we are causing these problems by allowing so many harmful chemicals in the environment, without knowledge of what all the interactions could be. At the very least we can work to eliminate some of the worst offenders and allow consumers to be informed when toxic chemicals are present in products.

We know it can be done because the European Union, Maine, Washington, California and Minnesota have already identified chemicals of concern. Certainly our Department of Public Health can utilize these lists to protect the citizens of Connecticut.

I strongly support passage of HB 5354, An Act Concerning Chemicals of High Concern to Children this session as good for our children, our families, and our economy.

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