

Testimony of Samantha Fonda, MSW Candidate, Uconn School of Social Work
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Public Health Committee
February 28, 2014
Testimony in support of SB 126, An Act Concerning Children's Exposure to Chemicals

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and the Honorable Members of the Public Health Committee,

I thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of Senate Bill 126, An Act Concerning Children's Exposure to Chemicals. This is an issue I am particularly drawn to as it has the potential to have impact the lives and the loved ones of everyone in this room in any of a variety of ways. I come to you as an MSW Candidate at the Uconn School of Social Work, a private citizen, a daughter, sister, niece, godmother and an a woman who one day wishes to bring new life into this world, healthy life unobstructed and untainted by chemicals that we as consumers have all along assumed were

Exposure to chemicals in a wide variety of products from toys to food, has been seen to cause extremely harmful effects on people in general, with children being the most vulnerable to these consequences. The research produced has been staggering, significant rising of brain cancer and leukemia diagnoses in children, growth in adult cancer rates, increase in learning and behavioral disorders, rise in reproductive issues with women as well as significant increases in asthma, insulin-resistance and diabetes diagnoses. The most aggravating and upsetting statistic I've heard, increasing my interest in the bill is that we are now seeing through umbilical cord analysis that babies in the country are being born with an average of over 200 industrial chemicals, neuro-toxins, carcinogens, and endocrine disrupters, already in their bodies at birth. How are we under these current circumstances giving our state's youth the best possible chance for a happy, healthy life given these factors?

By requiring DPH to identify and disclose chemicals that are felt to be of concern, we are taking a step forward to better safeguard our bodies and the health of our youth. As a woman with the intention of becoming a mother in the future, the health of my body and the ability to conceive and carry my child without having to worry about toxins in my food or household products and the impact they might have on my child's development is crucial.

It is truly a terrifying and distrusting realization to learn that we are going through our daily routines completely unaware of the damage potentially being caused to ourselves and our loved ones. As time goes by research gives us more and more information about these chemicals and it is a disservice to the people of Connecticut for its leaders not to react. I put my faith in this legislature to make the right decision that moves us closer to lowering rates of disease and providing a safe and healthy platform for Connecticut children to grow.

Thank You For Your Time,

Samantha Fonda
MSW Candidate, May 2014
University of Connecticut School of Social Work
Samantha.Fonda@uconn.edu