



State of Connecticut
Latino and Puerto Rican
Affairs Commission

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Testimony of Werner Oyanadel, Executive Director of LPRAC

in support of SB 126,

“An Act Concerning Children’s Exposure to Chemicals”

Public Health Committee, Friday, February 28, 2014

10:30 a.m. in Room 1D

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Good afternoon Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I speak in support of SB 126, An Act Concerning Children’s Exposure to Chemicals. My name is Werner Oyanadel, Executive Director of the Latino and Puerto Rican Affairs Commission. The Commission support SB 126 An Act Concerning Children’s Exposure to Chemicals.

We are deeply disturbed about the almost weekly news reports and research reports coming out that show the presence of toxic chemicals in consumer products. We know that there is growing consensus among the medical and scientific communities that exposure to these chemicals is strongly linked to the rise in many serious diseases we are seeing in this country today, including a 20% rise in childhood brain cancers and leukemia, learning and behavioral disorders and many adult cancers.¹ The recent report titled “What’s On Your List?” highlighted many chemicals that are carcinogenic, toxic to the brain and nervous system and disrupting to the endocrine system in many products we buy for children.²

We are especially concerned about the disproportionate burden that the Latino and Puerto Rican communities often bear with exposure to toxic chemicals in consumer products. Senate Bill 126 is a simple straight-forward step in the right direction. It requires the Commissioner of Public Health to identify chemicals potentially harmful to children and report with valuable information for members of our community and our policy makers. We believe that all citizens have the right to know of the presence of harmful chemicals in products.

LPRAC for the record is mandated to review and comment on any proposed state legislation or recommendations that may affect the Latino and Puerto Rican population of the state. (LPRAC) was created by an act of the Connecticut General Assembly (CGA) in 1994. This 21 member non-partisan commission is mandated to make recommendations to the CGA and the Governor for new or enhanced policies that will foster progress in achieving health, safety, educational success, economic self-sufficiency, and end discrimination in Connecticut.

We urge you to pass SB 126.

¹ Safer Chemicals Healthy Families, “Chemicals and Our Health: Why Recent Science is a Call to Action” July 2012.

² Washington Toxics Coalition, “What’s On Your List: Toxic Chemicals In Your Shopping Cart” February 2014.