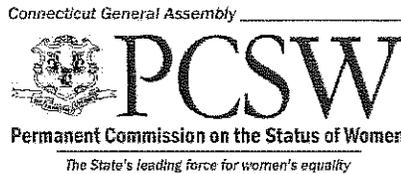


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Testimony of
The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women
Before the
Children's Committee
February 5, 2015

Re: **H.B. 5653, AAC Chemicals of High Concern to Children**

Senators Bartolomeo and Martin, Representatives Urban and Kokoruda, and distinguished members of the Insurance committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) in support of **H.B. 5653, AAC Chemicals of High Concern to Children**.

H.B. 5653 would direct the Department of Public Health to identify chemicals of concern to children and would require that the Department report to the Legislature every two years about the prevalence of the chemicals identified and whether any action should be taken. This legislation, if passed, would help women with families ensure that the products they purchase are safe.

The PCSW approaches this issue from a woman's perspective. Research indicates that many of the toxic chemicals being used to manufacture consumer products have the ability to cross the placenta.ⁱ A recent example of this is new information from Rutgers University that says a chemical used to create the color yellow, called PCB-11, is now being found in children's clothing, paper goods and toys.ⁱⁱ Research indicates that PCB's cross the placenta as well as pass through breast milk impacting both mothers and babies. Adverse health impacts of PCB-11 are still being researched but it's generally agreed upon that PCB's negatively impact the immune system, reproductive system and the nervous system.ⁱⁱⁱ Other chemicals like BPA and Teflon chemicals PFOA and PFOS, have been shown to cross the placenta as well.^{iv}

Secondly, women are the primary family members purchasing products for their families. Most mothers have no idea that toxic chemicals are being used in many of the baby and children's products they put in their shopping carts because the common assumption is that if a product can be bought off a shelf it must have undergone safety testing. Unfortunately, this is simply not the case. Fewer than 2% of the more than 80,000 synthetic chemicals in commerce have been reviewed for safety^v. Mothers (and fathers) want to have confidence that the items they buy for their families are safe.

We applaud this committee for your continued attention to matters of environmental health and urge you to support this measure which is a good first step in ensuring that the products women purchase for their families are healthy and safe.

¹ Washington Toxics Coalition, Toxic Chemicals Can Pass From Pregnant Woman To Child <<http://www.watoxics.org/toxicwatch/no-one-can-escape-toxic-chemicals>>

² ABC News, New Concerns Raised About Yellow Dyes <<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/concerns-raised-yellow-dyes/story?id=22640765>>

³ The National Center for Biotechnology Information, Fetal Exposure to PCBs and Their Hydroxylated Metabolites in a Dutch Cohort <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1247484/>>

⁴ The National Center for Biotechnology Information, Transfer of bisphenol A across the human placenta <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20350650>>

⁵ Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families, Why Recent Science is a Call to Action, July 2012 <<http://saferchemicals.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2013/09/chemicals-and-our-health-july-2013.pdf>>