



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Committee on Children

February 17, 2015

Commissioner Jewel Mullen, MD, MPH, MPA
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House Bill #6741 *AN ACT CONCERNING CADMIUM IN CHILDREN'S*

JEWELRY

The Department of Public Health (DPH) provides the following information on House Bill #6741.

The DPH believes it is important to prevent children's exposure to the toxic metal cadmium in children's jewelry as the jewelry may be chewed and swallowed by young children. Such actions can lead to the release of cadmium from the jewelry item into the acidic contents of the stomach with subsequent absorption into the body. Cadmium is highly toxic to the kidneys and may affect other systems and organs in a developing child.

This bill represents a revision of a 2010 Connecticut law that created a limit of 75 ppm for cadmium in children's jewelry. The revision maintains the 75 ppm limit on surface coatings such as paint, but allows the total content to be slightly relaxed to 100 ppm. A legislative task force formed subsequent to the passage of the 2010 law conducted extensive research on the issue of cadmium in jewelry. The task force concluded that a similar limit as that found in the law was appropriate, identifying a range of 100 to 300 ppm for a total content standard. DPH agrees with this finding to limit any total content limit within that range.

While DPH supports having protective limits on the cadmium content of children's jewelry, we must defer to the Department of Consumer Protection, as the agency regulating these limits, regarding concerns of fiscal impact and the proposed imposition of fees to conduct the administration of the program.

In addition, if the bill were to go forward, DPH recommends a revision in the cadmium test method to make the procedure as accurate and reliable as possible. The bill states that manufacturers or distributors will certify that the jewelry they are responsible for meets the cadmium content limits. The current bill states that they can certify this limit is met with X-ray fluorescence (XRF). XRF is a good screening device for work in the field but it is not as accurate as the laboratory-based American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) method for total cadmium content. This lab-based method involves highly reproducible protocols in which the jewelry item is digested followed by atomic absorption to detect the cadmium content. For manufacturer/distributor certification purposes, the ASTM lab-based method for total cadmium content should be required.

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Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

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