



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Public Safety and Security Committee

March 3, 2016

Commissioner Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.
860-509-7101

House Bill No. 5404 – AN ACT CONCERNING TOXIC FLAME RETARDANT CHEMICALS IN CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS AND UPHOLSTERED RESIDENTIAL FURNITURE.

The Department of Public Health (DPH) supports House Bill No. 5404.

This bill calls for a ban of five flame retardant chemicals from children's products, including 3 Tris chlorophosphates and two other types - a brominated diphenylether and a brominated cyclododecane. A number of these agents have been shown to cause carcinogenic activity and damage to the endocrine system and internal organs. The federal Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) assessed the risks from one of the chlorinated Tris retardants listed in the proposed legislation, TDCPP, in 2006. Its presence in children's foam products was associated with elevated cancer and non-cancer risks as calculated by CPSC. Data from the 1970s indicates that this class of flame retardants can be absorbed across the skin when incorporated into children's sleepwear as evidenced by urine biomonitoring samples. This fact was an important part of the evidence supporting the ban of Tris from sleepwear at that time.

Recent research shows TDCPP to be common in children's products that contain polyurethane foam, with the other targeted flame retardants, TCEP and TCPP, also detected. These flame retardants have taken the place of the brominated diphenylethers, which are not used in current manufacturing. Therefore, the inclusion of decabrominated diphenylether in this bill is likely unnecessary. The final retardant mentioned, hexabromocyclododecane, has been used increasingly in recent years while its safety continues to be challenged by an increasing body of scientific evidence.

In summary, this evidence shows a high potential for children's exposure to these persistent and toxic flame retardants if they are present in furniture and foam products which children contact. Therefore, the raised bill touches on a matter of importance to children's health. Several other states, including Washington, New York, Maryland, and Vermont, have recently passed similar bills banning these Tris flame retardants from children's products. Given the fact that safer flame retardants are available, the DPH supports the ban proposed by this bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Phone: (860) 509-7269
410 Capitol Avenue - MS # 13GRE, P.O. Box 340308 Hartford, CT 06134
An Equal Opportunity Employer