Consumer Technology Association™

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February 29, 2016 Via Email: pstestimony@cga.ct.gov

The Honorable Timothy D. Larson
The Honorable Stephen D. Dargan
Co-Chairs, Public Safety and Security Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3600
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: **H.B. 5404 -** An Act Concerning Toxic Flame Retardant Chemicals In Children's Products and Furniture – **OPPOSE**

On behalf of the Consumer Technology Association (CTA)™, I am writing to respectfully oppose Raised Bill No. 5404, legislation that would prohibit the manufacture, sale and distribution of furniture and "children's products" containing certain flame retardant chemicals.

CTA, formerly the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA)®, is the trade association representing the $287 billion U.S. consumer technology industry. Eighty percent of CTA's more than 2,200 companies are small businesses and startups; others are among the world's best known brands. Our member companies have long been recognized for their commitment and leadership in innovation and sustainability, often taking measures to exceed regulatory requirements on environmental design, energy efficiency, and product stewardship, with consumer safety at the core. The electronics sector has been voluntarily phasing out flame retardants in electronic devices for years - when and where technology, science, and advances in new material developments support the change.

CTA agrees with the bill's intent to reduce health threats to children and vulnerable populations; however, we have significant concerns with the bill:

- The definition of "children's product" in Section 1(1) fails to specifically exempt consumer electronics (CE) and may inadvertently capture CE devices under scope. Consumer electronics are generally exempted from these types of flame retardant restrictions as CE devices often contain power sources and are frequently subject to fire safety standards/flammability requirements; and,

- Second, the bill fails to recognize existing federal regulations governing chemical and consumer product safety and recent Congressional efforts to improve these standards.

CTA Support for Congressional Reform of TSCA

CTA strongly supports reform of the federal Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). The U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate – in overwhelming bipartisan fashion - have approved versions of bills to make significant changes to TSCA. In fact, Connecticut Senator Chris Murphy is a co-sponsor of the Senate version.

A national, uniform standard makes far greater sense from a policy and economic perspective than a patchwork of state flame retardant regulations. The federal TSCA reform bills are currently being reconciled and a conference product is expected soon – likely in spring 2016. The intent of reforming TSCA is to give EPA more authority to review chemicals in commerce, strengthen the safety standard, and strengthen protections for the most vulnerable. Passage of a federal bill would create a cohesive, effective national chemical management system that will give consumers, retailers, manufacturers, public health advocates and regulators across all 50 states the kind of predictability, consistency, and certainty that the national marketplace needs, while also strengthening oversight and providing Americans with more confidence in the safety of chemicals.

In short, TSCA provides a robust, national chemical regulatory system that responds to the concerns that H.B. 5404 attempts to address. For the above listed reasons, CTA urges you to oppose H.B. 5404, or at a minimum to explicitly exempt "consumer electronics" from the definition of "children's product" in Section 1(1). Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. If you have any questions about our concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at aschumacher@ce.org or 703-907-7631.

Sincerely,
THE CONSUMER TECHNOLOGY ASSOCIATION

/s/
Allison Schumacher
Senior Manager, Environmental Policy & Sustainability

CC: Members of the Connecticut Joint Committee on Public Safety and Security