

February 27, 2008

Written Testimony from Karen Owen

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy and members of the Environment Committee, my name is Karen Owen and my testimony is in support of "HB5601 AN ACT BANNING CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS CONTAINING LEAD, PHTHALATES OR BISPHENOL-A."

This important issue is critical for a safe and healthy environment that is essential for normal human growth and development. Since there are no regulations or restrictions in our state to adequately protect our children, it is paramount that policy changes be made to keep lead and other toxic chemicals out of toys and other children's products.

This fall, 35 Americans (including five Connecticut moms) learned about their personal exposure to toxic chemicals in the largest biomonitoring project of its kind. I am one of the Connecticut moms who volunteered to be part of the project along with four others-- a school psychologist, a public health worker, a state Senator from New Haven, and a massage therapist. While the CDC conducts biomonitoring studies, those participants do not learn their own results. The 35 participants in this project came from 7 states across the country. All of them volunteered to have their blood and urine tested for 3 chemicals: PBDEs (flame retardants linked with poor nervous system development and liver and thyroid damage), Bisphenol-A (an estrogen mimic found in hard plastic containers and food can linings), and phthalates (reproductive and respiratory toxins used to soften many vinyl products, and also found in hospital supplies and hair and body care products). You can read all about the biomonitoring project at the following website: IsItInUs.org.

My knowledge of toxic chemicals issues and my resolve to be part of the solution grew as a result of my participation in this project. During the project, I learned that I had 17 of 20 toxic chemicals that were tested for in my body, I am very concerned for our environment and our children, whom we need to protect.

Federal and State law needs to regulate the use of chemicals and BAN the use of lead, phthalates and Bisphenol-A! There are safer alternatives to these chemicals! I urge you to listen, read and act! Please vote YES for HB5601.

Thank you.

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