

Good Morning,

My name is Kathy Murphy, I am a pediatric nurse and an Environmental Nurse Consultant with the Connecticut Nurse's Association.

I have come to speak in support of HB 5601, An Act Banning Children's Products Containing Lead, Phthalates, or Bisphenol-A.

Children are our most vulnerable population in terms of inhaling or ingesting toxic chemicals since their systems that are still developing. Pound for pound, they are exposed to higher levels of these chemicals than adults.

Babies and young children inevitably put toys and other objects into their mouths as they explore their surroundings. These harmful chemicals are absorbed into their developing systems. These harmful chemicals come from every day common household products made for them such as toys, vinyl books and baby bottles.

It would be foolish to suggest that if levels are low enough then children are safe. The acceptable level of these chemicals in our children's bodies should be ZERO!

There are tens of thousands of untested chemicals being used in everyday consumer products. During daily activities, without our knowledge or permission our children are being exposed to these toxins and their health is being affected.

Low levels build up to dangerous ones. Our children, by virtue of their size and stage of development, are most at risk for even low levels of toxic chemicals. As parents, we know that our children should go to school fed, well rested, with their homework done and ready to learn. It is also

known that our children are exposed every day to toxins that impact their health and ability to learn and be successful in the learning environment.

For example, a child's exposure to Phthalates is linked to asthma. The incidence of asthma in our children is on the rise, a recent study showed that at least 10% percent of our school children have been diagnosed with asthma. A child that has asthma may have difficulty breathing, may not be able to participate in PE or play with friends at recess, are missing more days from school, have emergency room visits and hospitalizations-all of this-impacting on their daily learning and interaction with peers. As a public health nurse in Waterbury I have seen the impact of missed school days on academic success with a child with chronic medical conditions.

The precautionary principle was adopted by environmentalists and scientists in 1982. The precautionary principle is a moral and political principle which states that if an action or policy might cause severe or irreversible harm to the public, in the absence of a scientific consensus that harm would not ensue, the burden of proof falls on those who would advocate taking the action, such as a manufacturing making a product for children. I believe all parents adhere to the precautionary principle when it comes to protecting their children from any harm. A parent would not choose a product if they thought it would ever cause harm to their children. Parents are unaware of the variety the sources of toxins in our everyday lives and the consequences to these exposures. Parents need to be savvy, educated consumers and purchase safer products for their children to be cautious and safe, for the protection of their children and our future.

Please make protecting Connecticut's children a priority. HB 5601 would protect all of Connecticut's children from a lifetime of increasing body burden a lifetime of harm. There is no time to waste in making significant changes to our system for Our Children, Our Community and Ourselves.

Thank you...