

# Willimantic Chronicle

April 1, 2014

Letter to Editor

## **Bill Would Protect our Children from Toxic Chemicals**

There is growing consensus that the federal Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) does not adequately protect citizens from harmful chemicals in everyday products. Over 30 years of environmental health studies have linked toxins to diseases such as cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's, asthma, infertility and learning disabilities. Young children and developing fetuses are especially vulnerable; exposure to even a small amount can affect a child for life. Our nation's children need to be protected by stronger, more comprehensive chemical policies that define responsible development and use of the thousands of chemicals manufactured in the world today. But federal reform efforts are unlikely to pass in the near future. States like ours can lead by passing laws to protect our children and lead the country forward by example. SB 126, An Act Concerning Children's Exposure to Chemicals, currently before the CT General Assembly, and a similar bill, HB 5354, would move us towards protecting our most vulnerable citizens and giving parents the essential information they need to make rational decisions for their families.

SB 126 and HB 5354 simply require that the toxicologists at the Department of Public Health will provide a report to the legislature every two years which presents their review of chemicals of high concern to the health of young children and recommends appropriate actions to the legislature. They will call on the growing body of research and information available about chemicals used in children's products and their potential health impacts.

Addressing exposure to toxic chemicals at key stages of development will ultimately help to reverse the rising incidence of chronic disease among our children, and reduce health care costs in Connecticut as well. I hope that readers will let their legislators know that this is an issue they care deeply about!

Susan Eastwood

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