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News Release

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Chemical Institute, Cadmium Restrictions Pass the Legislature as the Clock Strikes Midnight

Advocates Praise the House and Senate and Urge Governor Rell to Sign the Measures into Law

Hartford -- Seconds before the end of the 2010 state legislative session, the Senate unanimously approved the creation of a Chemical Innovations Institute (HB 5126) to put Connecticut at the forefront of green chemistry and clean technology development. At the same moment, the House unanimously approved nationally significant restrictions on cadmium in children's jewelry (HB 5314).

At a time when consumers are increasingly demanding safe, green products and with increasingly stringent chemical regulations being implemented in other countries, the Institute will help in-state businesses thrive. Housed at the University of Connecticut Health Center, the Institute will promote safer alternatives to toxic chemicals and will help with ensuring access to international markets for Connecticut-manufactured products.

"We are thrilled that the legislature has taken action to stimulate our state's green economy and help protect our health and the environment at the same time," said Sarah Uhl, who works for Clean Water Action to coordinate the Coalition that backed the legislation. "These two bills keep Connecticut at the forefront of the chemical policy reforms that are long overdue in this country."

"We are so appreciative of the legislative leaders who came together from both sides of the aisle to make this legislation a priority," said Annamarie Beaulieu, Campaign Director of the Connecticut Public Health Association. "In particular, we would like to thank the Chairs of the Environment Committee, Senator Ed Meyer, D, Guilford, and Representative Richard Roy, D, Milford, Ranking Members Senator John McKinney, R, Fairfield and Representative Clark Chapin, R, New Milford, as well as Vice Chair Bryan Hurlburt, D, Tolland."

"The proposed Innovations Institute will be a vital resource for our emerging green industry. It will provide the knowledge and assistance to businesses, non-profits, and state agencies on better, greener alternatives to the current practices and technology," said State Rep. Bryan Hurlburt, D, (Ashford, Tolland, Willington), vice chair of the Environment Committee.

House Bill 5314, *An Act Banning Cadmium in Children's Jewelry*, passed the House last week unanimously (144-0), despite vocal opposition from Wal-Mart, the Toy Industry Association, the Fashion Jewelry Trade Association, and the American Chemistry Council. The Senate sent an amended version of the bill back to the House just an hour before midnight, and members of the House were able to squeeze it in as the very last bill of the evening. The bill establishes a health-protective, 75 part-per-million limit on the amount of cadmium allowed in children's jewelry beginning in 2014.

"We strongly support both of these bills because they will help protect public health and the quality of our environment," said Martin Mador, Legislative and Political Chair of the Connecticut Sierra Club.

The Coalition for a Safe & Healthy Connecticut, which supported both pieces of legislation, is made up of over 50 organizations representing health professionals, workers, nurses, businesses, environmentalists, occupational safety advocates, people of faith, and individuals whose health has been impacted by toxic chemicals.

www.safehealthyct.org

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