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# News Release

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## Environment Committee Tackles Toxic Chemicals

*Advocates praise two bills designed to reduce toxins*

Hartford— Today, the legislature's Environment Committee approved two bills that would help reduce toxic chemicals in children's products and workplaces. Building off of the high-profile Bisphenol-A legislation of 2009, the Committee is drawing praise from a diverse set of advocacy organizations supportive of this move toward more comprehensive and health-protective solutions.

"These broad reform policies are consistent with recent laws passed by Maine, Minnesota, and Washington State that provide more regulatory certainty for chemical companies and help stimulate green chemistry innovation," said **Sarah Uhl of Clean Water Action**, who coordinates the coalition backing the two bills.

**House Bill 5130**, the "Child Safe Products Act," would help protect children from the chemicals of highest concern in toys and other products designed for their use. The Department of Environmental Protection, in consultation with the Department of Public Health, would add at least a few chemicals of high concern to a Priority Chemicals of Concern list, through regulations. The Department could consult with the Interstate Chemicals Clearinghouse, which holds well-vetted priority chemical lists from Maine, Washington, and other state and federal governments that could be used as models. Chemicals of high concern added to the list would be phased out after three years, and the agencies would annually review the list to determine whether chemicals should be added or removed.

The American Chemistry Council (the trade association of major chemical manufacturers), and allies such as the Toy Industry Association, are lobbying hard against the bill in an effort to protect the status quo. Bill sponsors have already made a number of concessions in an effort to alleviate some of the industries' concerns while still producing a health-protective policy that advocates can strongly support.

"I think this bill is a really positive step forward for Connecticut," said **State Representative Beth Bye, D, West Hartford**. "It makes a more scientifically based process for keeping toxins out of children's products."

**House Bill 5126** would establish a Chemical Innovations Institute to foster green job growth, promote safe workplaces, and reduce the use of toxic chemicals that are increasingly linked to the rising incidence of numerous chronic diseases.

“With increasingly stringent chemical regulations being implemented in other countries, a Chemical Innovations Institute is an economic development opportunity that can help make Connecticut a leader on green chemistry innovation and help protect workers from toxic chemicals at the same time,” said **Pamela Puchalski of the Connecticut Council on Occupational Safety & Health.**

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