

Coalition for a Safe & Healthy CT

645 Farmington Ave., Fl. 3

Hartford, CT 06105

860-232-6232

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Contact:

Sarah Uhl, Coordinator of the Coalition for a Safe & Healthy Connecticut
860-882-9950 (mobile)

Giant Bottle with a Big Message

Lawmakers, Parents, Health Advocates Call for Action on Bisphenol-A

Hartford— State lawmakers and concerned citizens gathered outside the Legislative Office Building this morning in support House Bill 6572 to phase out the hormone disruptor Bisphenol-A (BPA) from food and beverage containers. The rally, held around a 20' baby bottle, took place just as the legislature's General Law Committee took a vote the BPA bill. Known for decades to mimic estrogen and impact the reproductive system, scientists now believe the chemical, used to make some plastic food containers and to line most food cans, may be contributing to a long list of chronic diseases and disorders, many of which are on the rise in Connecticut and elsewhere.

"The problem with BPA is even bigger than this bottle," said **Senator Ed Meyer, a Democrat from Branford who co-chairs the Environment Committee**. "It is a problem that extends to food and beverage cans, and reusable containers. But luckily, the Capitol is also bigger than the bottle, and as lawmakers we can look beyond the lobbying of the corporations raking in \$800,000 an hour from this chemical and pass legislation to remove it from the products used to store our food."

While the plastics industry continues to peddle their own scientific research, the pile of independent science linking BPA to numerous health effects continues to grow. Over 190 peer-reviewed, low-dose studies demonstrating the health effects have been published, and more are on the way.

"Not only is BPA linked to cancer, it also has been shown to make chemotherapy less effective," said **Tamara Adkins, Senior Researcher for Environmental Health Sciences** and a member of the **Interreligious Eco-Justice Network**. "BPA can damage the brain and cardiovascular system, and trigger adult-onset diabetes, early puberty, obesity, and other diseases."

As pressure from consumers and the list of proposed state legislation continues to grow, some companies are taking steps to remove BPA from their products. Most baby bottle manufacturers are now using glass or safer plastics, and just last week Vital Choice Wild Seafood Organics announced that all of their canned seafood is now 100% BPA-free.

“Even with some companies leading the way, new laws are needed to protect the public’s health from this unnecessary chemical as quickly as possible,” said **Annamarie Beaulieu, MPH, Campaign Director for the Connecticut Public Health Association.**

Laura Anderson, a mother from Wethersfield, concurred, “In 2007 I participated in a biomonitoring project and learned that my body was contaminated with Bisphenol-A. The more I learned about the potential health effects, and the vulnerability of young children, the more committed I became to advocating for smarter laws better able to protect families around Connecticut and around the country.”

Connecticut is one of over a dozen states considering legislation to require manufacturers of food and beverage containers to phase out BPA in favor of safer materials. If passed, House Bill 6572 would be the first state law in the nation to establish dates after which food and beverage containers could no longer be made with the chemical.

“With the Federal Food and Drug Administration continuing to take no action on BPA, it is time for states like ours to lead the way,” said **State Representative Bryan Hurlburt, a Democrat from Ashford and vice chair of the Environment Committee.** “Connecticut has a history of leading the nation on environmental health issues, and 2009 should be the year we add BPA to the list of hazards that our state is working to reduce.”

***The Coalition for a Safe & Healthy CT** is a growing alliance of 45 organizations—health, labor, scientific, environmental, faith and community groups—working to prevent harm to human health and the environment from toxic chemicals. www.safehealthyct.org*

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