

**Coalition for a Safe & Healthy CT**  
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**Safe Toys = Healthier Kids**  
*Diverse Coalition Supports House Bill 5601*

Hartford— Health professionals, workers, parents, environmentalists, and state officials testified before the Select Committee on Children and the General Law Committee today regarding new legislation to phase out chemicals of concern in children's products. House Bill 5650, AN ACT CONCERNING CHILD PRODUCT SAFETY, was heard today in the Children's Committee and would ban the manufacture and sale of products containing lead. Senate Bill 527 AN ACT PROHIBITING CERTAIN HARMFUL CHEMICALS IN CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS AND BANNING THE SALE OF RECALLED PRODUCTS, was heard in the General Law Committee, and would go farther to protect children by phasing out phthalates, lead, and bisphenol A.

The Coalition commends the legislative leaders who are spearheading both pieces of legislation, and recommend strengthening the bills to include the components of House Bill 5601, which is currently in the Environment Committee.

Following numerous recalls of children's toys, a groundswell of public support for safer products has fueled this new legislation.

"We know enough about the harmful effects of these chemicals to take decisive action and remove them from the many products that our children are repeatedly exposed to," said **Annamarie Beaulieu, MPH, Campaign Coordinator for the CT Public Health Association**. "We do not want to explain this debate to our grown children in 20 years as the opportunity that we missed to protect their fertility, health and well being."

"We should be the ones taking the lead on this and showing the world that we care more about our children than anyone else and we are going to take the steps needed to prove it!" said **Mike Fitts, Executive Director of the Connecticut Council on Occupational Safety and Health**.

Strong union support for this legislation also stems from a provision to start an Innovations Institute at the University of Connecticut Health Center to assess uses of hazardous chemicals by Connecticut businesses, and establish an infrastructure for helping companies shift to safer alternatives.

"The shift to safer alternatives will help protect workers, the environment, and the viability of our companies in a global marketplace that is becoming increasingly restrictive of toxic products," said **Sarah Uhl, Coordinator of the Coalition for a Safe & Healthy CT**. "Large toy manufacturers are already producing safer toys for better-regulated markets in Europe, California, Argentina, Fiji, and

Mexico. We do not want Connecticut to become a dumping ground for children's products that contain substances linked to birth defects, learning disabilities, and cancer."

Connecticut is not the only state considering children's products legislation this session.

"The Connecticut bill before the Environment Committee is a combination of all the best elements in the dozens of toxic toy bills that are being introduced across the country," said **Mijin Cha, Policy Specialist for the Progressive States Network**. "This Act identifies lists of chemicals of high concern, requires safer alternatives to be used when available, and provides for participation in the multi-state clearinghouse for chemicals of high concern."

"This is an opportunity to do some tremendous good for the citizens and economic interests of Connecticut, while bringing our chemical policies for children's products into the twenty-first century," said **Representative Richard Roy (D-Milford), Co-chair of the legislature's Environment Committee**. "This legislation will phase out some of the substances of most concern such as lead, phthalates, and bisphenol A from products for children."

An Act Concerning Safe Toys will:

Establish a framework for a safer chemicals policy by authorizing the Departments of Consumer Protection and Environmental Protection to ban chemicals of high concern in children's products when safer alternatives are available, and establishing an innovations institute to assist in identifying chemicals of high concern in toys and in use by CT businesses.

1. Require the Department of Consumer Protection to prohibit the sale of children's toys and children's products containing lead, phthalates, Bisphenol A, and other chemicals of high concern when safer alternatives are available
2. Require the Department of Environmental Protection to chair an interagency committee to identify a list of chemicals of high concern that are known to cause cancer, harm to reproduction or development, neurotoxicity, hormone disruption or which are persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic, based on published government lists.
3. Enable CT to participate in a multi-state clearinghouse on chemicals of high concern
4. Provide seed funding for an Innovations Institute to:
  - Assist the Departments of Consumer Protection and Environmental Protection in identifying chemicals of high concern and in testing toys and children's articles for chemicals of high concern
  - Identify which chemical substances, products and processes of high concern are most important to preserving the competitiveness of CT businesses and/or pose the most significant health risks to state residents and workers and recommend a process to identify, prioritize and phase in safer alternatives to the use of these chemicals
  - Provide information and education to business, industry, government, and consumers on chemicals of high concern and the availability of safer alternatives to their usage

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

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