

Coalition for a Safe & Healthy CT

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Advocates Test Legislators' Toys for Toxic Chemicals *Experts Support Proposed CT Bill to Protect Children from Toxic Hazards*

Hartford—Recent recalls of toys containing lead have highlighted the fact that corporate and government inaction has left children vulnerable to toxic chemicals lurking in their toy boxes. This morning, legislators, experts, and Coalition leaders discussed the science behind the argument, progress being made in other states, and the type of policy needed to solve the problem here in Connecticut.

Members of the Coalition for a Safe & Healthy CT used hand-held x-ray fluorescence analyzers to perform on-the-spot testing of legislators' office gadgets and toys from home. The legislature's Environment Committee has proposed legislation that would address the problem of toxic chemicals in children's products and other uses: An Act Concerning Safe Toys. The Coalition is calling on the legislature and Governor Rell to pass the bill to protect children's health.

"Phasing out unnecessary, hazardous chemicals from children's products is a necessary and common sense public health measure," said **Dr. Mark Mitchell, President of the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice**. "Reducing the toxicity of children's products produced or sold in Connecticut will help to prevent exposures from the manufacture, use, and disposal of these items."

"There is movement across the country to ban toxics in toys and children's products," said **Sarah Uhl, coordinator of the Coalition for a Safe & Healthy CT**. "Over half of the states have introduced, or are planning to introduce, legislation to protect children against toxics in toys and products."

"The Connecticut bill before the Environment Committee is a combination of all the best elements in the 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."

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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