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News Release

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Project Website: www.isitinus.org

CONFERENCE CALL For Reporters:

When: November 8, 2007, 12:30 pm EST

Where: 888-318-6431, password 35TOXIC

What: Opportunity to ask questions of nationally prominent scientists involved with the project.

TOXIC CHEMICALS FROM EVERY DAY PRODUCTS FOUND IN CONNECTICUT MOMS

Health Professionals, Advocates, Officials call for Phase out of Dangerous Chemicals in Favor of Safer Alternatives

Hartford, CT, November 8th, 2007 – Three types of toxic chemicals used in the components of everyday products were found in five Connecticut moms who participated in a nationwide biomonitoring project, according to a new report issued today by a coalition of public interest groups in seven states. The report comes at a time of heightened awareness of toxics in consumer products, including recent revelations about lead in toys and lipstick.

The report, entitled *Is it In Us: Toxic Trespass, Regulatory Failure and Opportunities for Action*, documents the results of blood and urine testing of 35 people from seven states for the presence of three classes of chemicals; Phthalates, Bisphenol A and Polybrominated Diphenyl ethers (PBDEs). The project found all three classes of toxic chemicals in every person tested.

Each of these chemicals is found in common products people use everyday, including baby bottles, shower curtains, cosmetics, couch cushions, computers, toys, and scores of other common items found in most American homes, schools and workplaces.

“These chemicals are impossible to avoid,” said **Sarah Uhl**, Coordinator of the Coalition for a Safe & Healthy CT, “Right now, it is perfectly legal to use toxic chemicals in everyday products, like phthalates in children’s toys and bisphenol A in food can linings.”

“Human and animal studies have linked the three chemicals to birth defects, cancer, learning disabilities, infertility, asthma and other health impacts of urgent public health concern. Some of the participants had levels near or above those linked to health impacts in laboratory animals,” said **Dr. Mary Jane Williams** of the CT Nurses Association.

Laura Anderson, a project participant from Wethersfield, said, “As hard as I try to eat right and maintain a healthy lifestyle, these results show that there is just no way to avoid being exposed to toxic chemicals.”

Nancy Simcox of Middlefield, who also participated in the project, said, “Some of my levels were greater than I expected, even greater than the average levels of the general population, and this just makes me wonder what body burden a worker with even more exposures might have.”

Project organizers point out that the federal law regulating chemicals – the Toxics Substances Control Act – was enacted in 1976 and has not been updated to reflect recent scientific advances, including evidence that even tiny doses of toxic chemicals may cause harm.

According to **Phil Sherwood** of the CT Citizen Action Group, “Our nation’s chemical safety system has failed. In the absence of federal action, it’s time to join together to develop pioneering state policies that will protect people from involuntary exposure to toxic chemicals from products we use every day.”

Sherwood urged Connecticut lawmakers to invest in identifying and developing safer alternatives to the toxics in use today, to protect consumers, workers, and even the viability of CT companies competing in a changing global marketplace, “We need to know how toxics are being used, and which products contain them, and we need to require that safer alternatives be used whenever feasible.”

Organizers also point out that because these chemicals are used in so many different products, consumers are not able to shop their way out of the problem. Some states throughout the country have taken the lead in creating chemical policy that seeks to eliminate potentially hazardous chemicals and ensure the safety of others used in products.

The seven states in this project, **Alaska, New York, Massachusetts, Michigan Minnesota, Connecticut and Illinois**, are taking the lead to create new solutions governing chemical use in those states as well as nationally.

Connecticut lawmakers spoke out forcefully for change, including **State Senator Toni Harp**, D-New Haven, who said, “I will support any bill from the Coalition.”

Attorney General Blumental also lended his strong support. "I will fight to remove deadly toxins from toys and everyday items," Attorney General Blumenthal said. "Lead, phthalates and other toxic chemicals are poison, potential killers that must be banned from playthings and household items. Applying lipstick, playing with a toy and typing on a computer must not carry the risk of disease and death. My office will work with advocates, health professionals and lawmakers to force phthalates, lead and other dangerous chemicals from toys and other products."

A full copy of the report and information about specific state proposals is available at www.isitinus.org.

Is It In Us? Is a project of the Commonweal Biomonitoring Resource Center and the Body Burden Working Group, a coalition of organizations including, Alaska Community Action on Toxics, the Coalition for a Safe & Healthy CT, Environment Illinois, Massachusetts Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow, Ecology Center, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, and Clean New York. For more information please visit www.isitinus.org

The Coalition for a Safe & Healthy Connecticut (CSHC) is a growing statewide alliance of citizens, workers, educators and health professionals working to prevent harm to our health from toxic hazards. CSHC is leading statewide and local campaigns to reduce and eliminate toxic chemical exposures in our everyday lives – in buildings, schools and workplaces, air, water and food, and in consumer products. Our goal is to replace hazardous toxic substances with proven, safer alternatives.