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LAWMAKERS, HEALTH ADVOCATES RAISE CONCERNS OVER TOXIC FLAME RETARDANTS FOUND IN BABY PRODUCTS

Issue to be Addressed In Legislative Session

HARTFORD -- State Representative Diana Urban (D-North Stonington) and State Senator Terry Gerratana (D-New Britain), the co-chairs of the Select Committee on Children, raised concerns today at a State Capitol news conference over a recent report citing that many popular baby products contain toxic flame-retardants linked to cancer, hormone disruption and other health effects.

They were joined by members of the Coalition For A Safe and Healthy Connecticut, health care advocates, concerned parents and fellow lawmakers.

The issue is expected to be the subject of legislation when the legislature convenes next month with health advocates urging a state ban on toxic Tris flame retardants.

The report, "Hidden Hazards In the Nursery," found toxic flame retardants in 85% (17 of 20) of new baby and children's products tested, including bassinet pads, nursing pillows, changing pads, and car seats.

The most prevalent flame retardant found was chlorinated Tris (TDCPP), a chemical voluntarily removed from children's pajamas in the 1970s when it was found to cause adverse health effects. Chlorinated Tris was present in 80% of the products (16 of 20). California recently classified chlorinated Tris as a carcinogen, and evidence links the chemical to neurotoxicity as well as hormone disruption.

"It is absolutely shocking that companies would choose to use a fire retardant that was banned in children's pajamas in the 70's in baby products that are being used today," **Rep. Urban** said. "Parents expect that when they buy a changing pad or a nursing pillow that it is safe to use. This report makes it abundantly clear that these fire retardants, and specifically Tris, are mutagenic, carcinogenic and hormone disruptors. We will be addressing this in the upcoming session and I look forward to working with the Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut members to keep Connecticut kids safe and healthy."

"Parents expect that any products they buy – especially for their children – should be safe. That's common sense," said **Sen. Gerratana**. "The fact that these products are still sold just about everywhere is surprising and alarming. As legislators, I believe it is very appropriate that we take steps to ban these carcinogens, especially among our most vulnerable population: children."

"As busy working moms, how are we supposed to find the time to research every single product we give our children?" said **Michelle Noehren**, Events and Special Projects Manager for the Permanent Commission for the Status of Women. "The answer is: we can't and the reality is, moms assume the

products they buy are safe for their children. We rely on the government to keep us safe and somewhere along the line there's been a clear failure. Toxic chemicals have no place in our products."

"The widespread use of chlorinated TRIS, a known carcinogen, in children's products is one more shocking reason why states need to take action to protect the health of our most vulnerable citizens," said **Anne Hulick**, Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut Coordinator. "The Coalition for a Safe and Healthy Connecticut applauds Representative Urban, Senator Gerratana and the Select Committee on Children for raising awareness of this issue. We look forward to working with members of the legislature in leading efforts to reduce exposure to harmful chemicals."