



**MEDIA ADVISORY FOR
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30 States Nationwide Will Announce Bills to Protect Kids and Families from Toxic Chemicals on Wed. Jan 19

States Attempt to Minimize Public Health Impact Of Dangerous Chemicals As Congress Lags Behind

In response to continued public concern over the presence of dangerous chemicals in common household products, coupled with Congressional inaction on the matter, on Wednesday, January 19, legislators and advocates in thirty states across the country and the District of Columbia will announce legislation aimed at protecting children and families from harmful chemicals. Despite well-funded opposition from the chemical industry, 18 state legislatures have already passed 71 chemical safety laws in the last eight years by an overwhelming, bipartisan margin – with more to come this year.

"With over half of state legislatures introducing policies that protect kids and families from toxic chemicals, Congress and chemical industry lobbyists should take notice. As long as toxic chemicals such as cadmium and BPA remain in consumer products, states will continue to pass commonsense policies to address this serious public health threat," said Laurie Valeriano, Policy Director at the Washington Toxics Coalition in Seattle, Washington.

Increasing rates of chronic diseases linked to toxic chemical exposure, including cancer, asthma, and infertility, have created an urgency in state capitols to enact policies to get harmful chemicals off the market.

Bills to be considered in the 30 states include: bans on BPA and hazardous flame retardants in consumer products; requirements that children's product manufacturers use only the safest chemicals; and resolutions urging Congress to overhaul the 1976 Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) – the federal law that allows dangerous and untested chemicals to be used in everyday products and materials.

"A substantial body of scientific research shows that the public is exposed to chemicals that increase the risk of serious health threats, including cancer, asthma, infertility, and learning and developmental disabilities," said Dr. Ted Schettler, MD, MPH, Science Director of the Science and Environmental Health Network. "For most chemicals, no Government agency has the authority to require safety testing before they are put into widespread use. It's an uncontrolled experiment, and individuals and families across the country are paying the price."

Despite overwhelming public support for stronger laws on toxic chemicals, Congress has heeded the aggressive opposition of chemical industry lobbyists rather than the support of the American electorate and failed to pass TSCA reform legislation three times in the last six years. However, the battle will continue at the federal level in 2011, with new TSCA reform bills expected to be introduced.

“The American public is demanding new chemical safety laws, and state elected officials – both Republicans and Democrats – are responding,” said Andy Igrejas, Campaign Director of the Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families coalition. “At some point Congress will wake up and realize it is better for industry *and* public safety to make these changes at the federal level, as well.”

“As long as the Federal government continues to delay action in reforming our nation’s toxics laws to ensure the safety of chemicals used in everyday products, my colleagues and I will continue our efforts in state legislatures to protect our children’s health from dangerous chemicals,” said National Caucus of Environmental Legislators President, Maryland Delegate James W. Hubbard.

Policies to be considered in 2011 state legislatures include:

Comprehensive State Laws: Nine states, including Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Oregon, Washington and Vermont, will be introducing or have introduced policies to change the way we regulate chemicals at the state level.

BPA Phase Outs: At least seventeen states will be introducing or have introduced policies to restrict the use of BPA in infant formula cans, receipt paper, baby bottles and/or sippy cups including: Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas and the District of Columbia.

State TSCA Resolutions: At least eleven states will be calling on the 112th U.S. Congress to bring our federal chemicals policy into the 21st century: Alaska, California, Delaware, Georgia, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, South Dakota, Texas and Wisconsin.

Banning Cadmium in Children’s Products: At least eight states will be introducing or have introduced policies to ban the use of cadmium in children’s products, including: Florida, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey and New York.

Deca BDE (toxic flame retardant) Phase Outs: At least three states will be introducing or have introduced policies to reduce exposure to deca BDE, including: Alaska, Massachusetts, New York and the District of Columbia.

Legislation planned: Chemical safety legislation is also planned in South Dakota.

A map of the US showing states that are introducing reform can be found here:

<http://www.saferchemicals.org/2011/01/30-states-nationwide-to-announce-upcoming-bills-to-protect-kids-and-families-from-toxic-chemicals-on.html>

Last November two national health-based coalitions, [SAFER States](#) and [Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families](#), released a report called *Healthy States: Protecting Families from Toxic Chemicals While Congress Lags Behind* (<http://blog.saferchemicals.org/2010/11/healthy-states-protecting-families->

from-toxic-chemicals-while-congress-lags-behind.html). This first-ever analysis of votes on state laws aimed at protecting the public from toxic chemicals found that, of more than 9,000 votes cast by state legislators, 73% of Republicans and 99% of Democrats favored stronger protection of children's health and the environment from dangerous chemicals, with equal support from governors of each party. The report found that the pace of state policymaking on chemicals has more than tripled in eight years.

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ATTN JOURNALISTS: Interviews are available with experts in each state. Please call Shayna Samuels at 718-541-4785 for a list of spokespeople.