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Everyday Exposure to Dangerous Levels of Toxic Chemical BPA Unavoidable for U.S. Families

*New Study Finds Foods Contaminated with Chemical
Linked to Chronic Diseases on the Rise*

Senator Feinstein, others demand BPA ban in Food Safety Bill

(Washington, DC) **Senator Dianne Feinstein** stood with environmental health advocates today on Capitol Hill to release a new report that demonstrates alarming levels of bisphenol A (BPA) in common canned foods. BPA is a synthetic sex hormone and exposure to low doses has been linked to abnormal behavior, diabetes and heart disease, infertility, developmental and reproductive harm, and obesity, which raises the risk of early puberty, a known risk factor for breast cancer.

Senator Feinstein has introduced legislation that would ban BPA in cans, in addition to other food and beverage containers. The Senator is hopeful that the Food Safety Act will include language that protects consumers from BPA exposure.

“We found in our analysis that if someone is eating just one meal with at least one canned food product, their levels of BPA are as much as those that have been shown to cause health effects in laboratory animal studies,” says **Bobbi Chase Wilding of Clean New York**, co-author, of *No Silver Lining, An Investigation Into Bisphenol A in Canned Foods*, by The National Workgroup for Safe Markets, a coalition of U.S. public health- and environmental health-focused organizations.

Martina Jackson-Haynes, a **Berea, Kentucky** study participant, who contributed the green peas found to have the second highest level of BPA of all the canned goods tested,

said about the results, “How can we protect ourselves from harmful chemicals when we have no way of knowing that the chemicals are in the foods we purchase? I can only hope that the results of this study will lead to stricter regulations and safer products.”

Elizabeth Crowe, Executive Director of the **Kentucky Environmental Foundation** said, “We don't know why the peas Martina purchased from our local Wal-Mart registered the 2nd highest level of BPA of the canned foods tested, but we do know it's time to take action to stop BPA exposure now. I'm angry and frustrated that you can look at a can of green peas and not have a clue as to what toxics are inside. But I refuse to be paralyzed by the unknown. I know solutions can be found if there is the political will to find them.”

“Six states have taken crucial first steps this year to get this hormone mimicking chemical out of our children’s food, but this report shows that there is much more to be done. Senator Feinstein’s bill will protect much more of our food from this toxic contamination,” said **U.S. Public Interest Research Group** Public Health Advocate **Elizabeth Hitchcock**.

“BPA is a bad actor chemical that should not be in contact with food we eat,” says **Laura Vandenberg, PhD, Tufts University**, a leading BPA researcher. “Hundreds of independent peer-reviewed scientific studies have found harm from low doses of BPA and its inexcusable the chemical is still used in food cans.”

“We commissioned this study to see what level of BPA might be consumed from canned foods in a typical, everyday American diet,” explains **Mia Davis** from **Clean Water Action**, another of the report’s co-authors, “We wanted to know if the amount of BPA found in canned foods and beverages would be enough to affect a person’s health, or the health of their child if they are pregnant.”

Mike Schade from **Center for Health, Environment & Justice**, also a co-author, says, “General Mills just announced that it is removing BPA from its organic tomatoes’ cans, so we know that companies that want to do the right thing, will, but we need the FDA to insure a basic level of protection for consumers.”

BPA in canned foods is just one of thousands of ways we are exposed to dangerous chemicals in everyday products,” said **Andy Igrejas**, national campaign director for **Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families**, a coalition of 200 environmental and public health groups. “The proposed Safe Chemicals Act needs to be strengthened and passed so that people, especially children, are not bombarded with such hazards.”

Highlights:

- Levels in canned food that are the same or similar to levels of BPA found in the urine of over 90% of Americans by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and cord blood of newborn babies.

- One can of DelMonte green beans had the highest levels of BPA ever found in canned food, at 1140 parts per billion; EPA presumes BPA is safe at 50 parts per billion per day.
- The study tested 50 cans from 19 states for BPA contamination, including cans with fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, soups, tomato products, sodas, and milks, which together represent common meal options for a wide range of North American consumers.
- Test results showed there is inconsistency across brands and types of food, which prevents consumers from avoiding BPA just by looking at a label. In one case, two different cans of peas from two separate lots had an extreme difference: one had six parts per billion, while the other had over 300 parts per billion.
- Eating canned foods can expose consumers to levels of bisphenol A (BPA) that are up to 22 times higher than safety standards now being evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration.

BPA has been banned from baby bottles and children's sippy cups in six states (Connecticut, Maryland, Minnesota, Washington, Wisconsin, and Vermont), three counties in New York and the City of Chicago. Only Connecticut and Vermont restrict the use of BPA in cans of baby food.

Denmark has recently become the first country to enact a BPA ban and Canada has banned BPA in baby bottles while the French Senate is working to impose restrictions. Japan asked manufacturers for voluntary restriction of BPA from canned food in 1998 and saw a decline in their population's levels of contamination.

The National Workgroup for Safe Markets is a coalition of U.S. public health and environmental NGOs including:

[Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow](#)
[Breast Cancer Fund](#)
[Center for Health, Environment and Justice](#)
[Clean New York](#)
[Clean Water Action](#)
[Coalition for a Safety & Healthy Connecticut](#)
[Environmental Defence \(Canada\)](#)
[Environmental Health Fund](#)
[Environmental Health Strategy Center](#)
[Healthy Legacy](#)
[Learning Disabilities Association of America](#)
[Oregon Environmental Council](#)
[Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families](#)
[Washington Toxics Coalition](#)
[Women's Voices for the Earth](#)
[U.S. Public Interest Research Group](#)

Available for Interviews

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Mike Schade, **Center for Health, Environment and Justice**. Mike can address retailers pulling BPA products from their shelves and changes with manufacturers. Report Co-author, 212.964.3680 or mike@chej.org.

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Laura N. Vandenberg, **Tufts University School of Medicine**, BPA researcher, 617.636.0444, laura.vandenberg@tufts.edu

Janet Nudelman, **Breast Cancer Fund**, can address Feinstein amendment, President's Cancer Panel Report with BPA reference and EPA identifying BPA in context with TSCA reform, call Shannon Coughlin, **Breast Cancer Fund**, 415-336-2246.

Nancy Buermeyer, **Breast Cancer Fund**, can address Feinstein amendment, President's Cancer Panel Report with BPA reference and EPA identifying BPA in context with TSCA reform, nbuermeyer@breastcancerfund.org, or call Shannon Coughlin, **Breast Cancer Fund**, 415-336-2246.

Elizabeth Hitchcock, Public Health Advocate. **U.S. Public Interest Research Group**, (202) 546-9707, elizabeth@pirg.org, Liz is coordinating with Senator Feinstein's office and can speak to BPA federal policy issues.

Andy Igreijas, national campaign manager for **Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families**. Contact **Margie Kelly**, **Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families** 541 344-2282, info@saferchemicals.org. Andy will address BPA in context with TSCA reform.

Resources

www.contaminatedwithoutconsent.org/nosilverlining