

# Protect the Health of Maine Families from Toxic Chemicals in Every Day Products

Every day, toxic chemicals threaten the health of our children—increasing their risk of developing cancer, reproductive problems, learning disabilities, autism, and asthma.

**Pregnant women and children are *especially* vulnerable to toxic chemicals found everywhere in our homes** - from chlorinated flame retardants in furniture, phthalates in personal care products, and BPA in canned goods. Yet, our federal chemical safety system is badly broken.

**That's why the Maine legislature enacted the Kid Safe Products Act (KSPA)** by an overwhelming bipartisan margin in 2008, upholding it in 2011. The law provides science-based tools for taking action on Chemicals of High Concern – a list of the worst-of-the-worst chemicals that threaten Maine families' health.



**However, inconsistent implementation of the Kid Safe Products Act has excluded pregnant women from health protections and left consumers in the dark when it comes to which products contain the worst chemicals.**

## We all have a Right to Know about Dangerous Chemicals

### PASS LD 948: THE HEALTHY KIDS BILL

- **PROTECT PREGNANT WOMEN FROM HARM**

Under Maine law, the DEP can take action on Chemicals of High Concern in any products that threaten the health of kids *and* pregnant women. But since 2011, the DEP has largely excluded products for pregnant women from all right-to-know rules.

The Healthy Kids Bill would require Maine DEP to include products that threaten the health of kids *and* pregnant women in any rule making under KSPA, unless it provides a scientific reason to exclude products.

- **COLLECT INFORMATION ON CHEMICALS OF HIGH CONCERN**

The Healthy Kids Bill would synchronize with Washington state law by requiring manufacturers to report their use of Maine's 45 Chemicals of High Concern.

- **IDENTIFY SAFER SUBSTITUTES FOR TOXIC CHEMICALS IN PRIORITY PRODUCTS**

The Healthy Kids Bill would harmonize with California state law by requiring Maine to name three priority products containing Chemicals of High Concern, and require manufacturers to document safer alternative chemicals for those products.

# The Goal of Maine's Kid Safe Products Act (2008) is to Protect the Health of Kids *and* Pregnant Women from Toxic Chemicals

In 2008, the Maine legislature enacted the Kid Safe Products Act with overwhelming bipartisan support, which authorizes the state to use strong, credible scientific evidence to take action on the worst chemicals in products that threaten the health of children *and* pregnant women.

The law established a list of Chemicals of High Concern and enabled the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to choose chemicals from the list to become "Priority Chemicals." The Maine DEP can take action to protect kids and pregnant women from exposure to priority chemicals in three ways: (1) require product makers to report their use of Priority Chemicals, (2) research whether safe and affordable alternative chemicals are available, or (3) phase out Priority Chemicals if safe, affordable, and available alternatives exist.

However, the implementation of the Kid Safe Products Act has often been more symbolism than substance: most actions addressing Priority Chemicals have been too weak to provide a real public health benefit for kids and pregnant women.

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## Case Study: The Right to Know about Toxic Phthalates

Last year, Maine citizens petitioned the DEP to name 4 types of toxic hormone-disrupting chemicals called phthalates (pronounced thal-eights) as the next Priority Chemicals in Maine, and to give citizens the right to know about phthalates in their products.

The petition, signed by over 2,000 Maine people, required the Maine DEP to consider the right-to-know proposal. 1,600 people submitted public comments in favor of the rule, including several nationally recognized scientists who confirmed that phthalates cause harm during prenatal exposure, leading to birth defects, asthma, and learning disabilities.



But in early 2015, the Maine DEP drastically watered down the proposal to exclude most products that are common sources of exposure to children, and nearly all products that would be routinely used by pregnant women. **As a result, consumers will have no information about whether products like handbags, clothing, cosmetics and shampoo contain toxic phthalates.**

**The Healthy Kids bill** would direct the DEP to include all household products that expose children and pregnant women to phthalates in this right-to-know rulemaking, and make sure the agency uses credible science as the guiding force behind its future decisions. We can do better for Maine kids!

### **SUPPORT LD 948: THE HEALTHY KIDS BILL**

**Maine families have the right to know about phthalates and other toxic chemicals in everyday products**