



MEMORANDUM

To: Sen. Alan Bates, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Ways and Means Sub-Committee on Human Services
Rep. Nancy Nathanson, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Ways and Means Sub-Committee on Human Services
Members of the committee

From: Members of the Community Health Committee of the Oregon Medical Association
Betsy Boyd-Flynn, OMA Deputy Executive Vice President

Date: May 13, 2013

Re: Support of HB 3162-A

HB 3162-A requires that the Oregon Health Authority create and maintain a publicly available list of designated high priority chemicals of concern for children's health that are used in children's products. A growing body of evidence shows that the synthetic chemicals found in children's products or containers used to store food and toys have the greatest impact on the health of children and pregnant women. We know from bio-monitoring studies that heavy metals, hormone disruptors and other toxics are present in our bodies. Studies of indoor dust and air find the same toxics in our homes and child care environments. And the people at greatest risk of harm from these exposures are our infants and children as their bodies and brains develop.

Despite ongoing research and bio-monitoring studies, families and the public continue to have limited access to chemical ingredient information for products they and their families use. The OMA supports the creation of an OHA website that will monitor the potential exposure of toxic chemicals in children's products and allows public access to this information. We believe this is a step in the right direction towards full disclosure of product components. The bill also allows the OHA to participate in the Interstate Chemical Clearinghouse, an interstate association that provides high quality and authoritative chemicals data to states, organizations and the public to foster the development and use of safer chemicals and products.

The OMA has supported past legislative efforts to protect the public and particularly children, from harmful chemicals in consumer products. The OMA had the opportunity to publicly support previous legislation on Bisphenol (BPA), one of the chemicals that will be included on this high priority chemical priority list. Products that contain chemicals like BPA, even in small doses, are known to cause chronic disease, cancer, infertility and learning disabilities. Oregon should not stand by and

accept this burden on our health and especially on the health of our children- it is our responsibility to address the chemicals we know to be of great concern and work on solutions so that these chemicals are no longer a threat to any child.

HB 3162-A is comprehensive, and we believe, less onerous on the companies who manufacture and use these chemicals in Oregon products. Disclosing the inclusion of chemicals in various products – especially those intended for use by children – allows parents and consumers to make more informed choices about the products they buy, and creates an incentive for competition among manufacturers to improve their practices.

We believe this legislation represents a sound approach to managing Oregon’s efforts in this arena. Aligning with other states and building off work already done by the Department of Environmental Quality is a pragmatic and more efficient means of identifying chemicals of concern and has the potential to magnify the work in this arena we will undertake in the future.

The Oregon Medical Association is an organization of over 7,800 physicians, physician assistants, and medical students organized to serve and support physicians in their efforts to improve the health of Oregonians. Additional information can be found at www.theOMA.org.