



**Written Testimony in Support of HB 3162  
Submitted to the House Committee on Health Care**

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Chair Greenlick and members of the House Committee on Health Care, thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Naomi Pusch and this is my daughter Klara. I am a member of the Oregon Center for Christian Voices and Klara and I are here today to ask for your help in keeping Oregon's children safe from toxics by passing House Bill 3162. Anyone who has ever said, "Don't put that in your mouth" 15 times in one hour knows that children interact differently with our world than we do.

As biologist and mother Dr. Sandra Steingraber has said:

*"Pound for pound of body weight, children drink more water, eat more food, and breathe more air than adults. ...yet our environmental policies pretend that children – who make up 40 percent of the world's population – do not exist. Entire regulatory systems are premised on the fact that all members of the population basically act, biologically, like middle-aged men. The laws and rules so generated by these systems are thus blinded to the unique characteristics of children..."\**

Children are proportionally more exposed to chemicals of concern and more vulnerable to adverse health effects of these chemicals. But, as Dr. Steingraber points out, not only do the testing methods for chemical toxicity fail to consider the unique biology of children, but our chemical regulatory system is unresponsive to the development of new chemicals and emerging evidence about previously unknown types of dangers.

My husband was born in Germany and sometimes I wonder if our 18-month old daughter wouldn't be safer there, where chemicals must be tested before they are placed on store shelves in the form of children's products.

Under our current federal laws, the EPA has to prove something is unsafe. The burden of proof lies with an overtaxed federal agency that can't keep up.

For now, it's up to the states to take action - and the least we can do is give our health officials the tools to track these chemicals and make sure they are removed from products that very busy moms and dads introduce to their children. I am not a scientist, and I don't have time to become one in my spare time (because I don't have any), but at least let me benefit from the scientific community's assessment of toxic chemicals. Let's make sure these chemicals are no longer allowed to be in the products my toddler puts in her mouth, drinks from, eats off of, sleeps in, gets changed on, or otherwise comes into contact with on a regular basis.

Kids are God's gifts to us to love and protect. They are our future. As parents, we need your help to keep our kids safe. That's why we urge you to support HB 3162.

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