

March 2, 2014

Sen. Chris Edwards, Chair  
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Edwards and Members of the Committee:

From the cleanup of the Willamette River a half-century ago to the recent passage of legislation regulating mercury and toxic flame retardants, Oregonians have consistently been in the forefront of efforts to reduce pollution and toxics and to create a healthier environment. Throughout my public life, I have worked with many dedicated individuals who have worked tirelessly to protect their fellow citizens from harmful chemicals.

However, while scientific knowledge of how certain pollutants affect human health has grown significantly over the years, there is still much we do not know. For example, we are only beginning to understand the impact of exposure to hormone disrupting chemicals found in everyday products on infant and child development.

If we do one thing to address the impact of chemical exposure, it should be to protect our children. Because children's bodies are growing and developing, they are especially vulnerable to the effects of toxic chemicals. Current regulation of chemicals in children's toys and other products does not sufficiently protect them from health impacts associated with exposure to all toxic chemicals.

Senate Bill 478 takes several sensible steps toward protecting our children by requiring that manufacturers provide more information when their products contain chemicals that could harm children's health, and by creating a pathway for eventually eliminating those chemicals from products used by children.

Many manufacturers have already found innovative ways to remove toxic chemicals from their products. I urge you to pass SB 478 to accelerate our progress toward a healthier future for Oregon's children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Roberts".

Governor Barbara Roberts  
Oregon Governor 1991-1995  
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Portland, OR 97202