

*from the desk of Senator Sara
Belser*
SAB



As faith organizations working to protect the most vulnerable among us and for stewardship of God's creation, **we urge your support for SB 478**, which requires manufacturers to notify public health officials when their children's products contain chemicals of concern for children's health and to phase out the most hazardous over time.

There is widespread consensus among faith-based organizations and denominations that ethical chemical policies must embody the following principles:

- 1) demonstrate the safety of chemicals before they end up in the products we all use and ultimately migrate into our bodies and the environment,
- 2) swiftly remove the most dangerous chemicals when safer alternative exist, and
- 3) reduce the disproportionate burden of toxic chemicals borne by low-income communities and communities of color and by the unborn, infants and children.

A 2010 national statement with Oregon signers, "Christian Principles for a Healthy Body and Spirit," calls for the requirement that "companies and government regulatory agencies to inform people about chemicals that are in consumer products through "right to know" and a published chemical database so that individuals and state regulatory agencies can make sound decisions for their families, their congregations and their communities."

As SB 478 comes up for a vote, **please consider how this bill will protect the most vulnerable Oregonians and the benefits that it will have for health and health care savings and for Oregon's economy.** Here are some reasons this bill deserves your support:

- There is widespread consumer concern about the effects of exposure to chemicals in daily life. A national survey found that 76% of voters have this concern. Tracking chemicals and prioritizing risks will restore consumer confidence in products that Oregonians purchase.
- The bill focuses on chemicals established by scientific authorities to be carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, or ones that harm reproduction and development, including arsenic, cadmium, mercury, benzene, and formaldehyde, which need to be identified in children's products and that have no place in products that children come into regular contact with.
- The bill provides clear authority and a streamlined process to track chemicals of concern, which is more efficient and cost-effective than addressing them one by one.

Please leave an important legacy this session and protect the health of the most vulnerable Oregonians, our children, by voting Yes on SB 478.

Sincerely,

Jenny Holmes, Environmental Ministries Director, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, 503-221-1054 ext. 214,
jholmes@emoregon.org

Andy Harris, MD, Board of Directors, Oregon Center for Christian Voices, 503-871-2011, andyharrismd@comcast.net