

Testimony in support of Toxic Free Kids Act  
Susan Beal  
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My name is Susan Beal and I am the mother of two young children here in Oregon. I was very proud to testify in support our Toxic Free Kids Act along medical professionals, scientists, environmental advocates, and other parents, and am equally dismayed at the attempts in SB 836 to weaken or neutralize the very important provisions signed into law.

If a manufacturer is using a carcinogen like formaldehyde in children's clothes or brain-damaging cadmium and mercury in toys, it should not be a secret. I do my best to protect my own kids from as many of these "chemicals of concern" as I can. But they are very different from one another, and dangerous at very different levels, which scientists at OHA should be monitoring – the "100 parts per million" benchmark is meaningless.

If you've spent any time around young children, you are familiar with how much of a toy or garment goes right into their mouths, whether or not it should. Chemicals can also leach from a container into food, or go into the air as dust or vapor. These are not risks to take when it comes to children's health, so "inaccessible" is also a worthless restriction.

Parents shouldn't have to be researchers or chemists to avoid exposing our children to toxic chemicals—or to reward the great companies who don't use toxics in the first place. The state of Oregon, and its health and science experts, should be helping to ensure that our health is not at risk from everyday products. And when other states have already done that important work and it's peer-reviewed, there's simply no point in an expensive, time-consuming re-analysis.

Phasing out chemicals deemed dangerous by scientists should be under their authority, not a long, dragged-out legislative and gubernatorial review one by one. Rule-making is the place for those important contributions, not when each dangerous chemical is evaluated – again, by objective scientists who know them best.

SB 836 must not be allowed to undo these crucial, common-sense protections and weaken our best efforts to protect children's health.

Thank you so much,  
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