



March 29, 2018

Dear Representative,

Vermont firefighters, health professionals, business groups, educators, labor organizations, public health and children’s advocates, and environmental groups, urge you to **vote to concur with the Senate proposal of amendment on S.103 to better protect Vermonters – and particularly our children – from toxic chemicals**. We also call on you to **oppose any amendments** that would weaken this important bill.

Toxic chemicals are linked to many negative health impacts, including childhood and other cancers, infertility and other reproductive harm, learning disabilities and behavioral disorders, obesity, asthma and other respiratory diseases, and more. This bill takes three simple steps to help keep Vermont families safe from harmful chemicals.

After drinking water wells in North Bennington and elsewhere were found to be contaminated by the toxic chemical PFOA, the Legislature established a Working Group to identify ways to avoid future toxic threats to human health and our environment. That Working Group included diverse stakeholders, a majority of whom supported a range of policies to better protect Vermont families. Several Working Group recommendations are included in S.103.

First, the bill **establishes an interagency committee to improve coordination among the numerous state agencies that regulate toxic and hazardous substances**. This working group will seek ways to streamline reporting on chemical use for businesses, while also making important recommendations on how to better protect our families from toxic chemicals.

Second, S.103 **requires all new drinking water wells to be tested for toxic chemicals** such as arsenic, lead, and uranium. Vermonters have a right to know what is in their drinking water, and to be assured their water is safe for all uses, including drinking, bathing and cooking.

Third, S.103 **makes essential changes to the Chemicals of High Concern in Children's Products program to ensure it works as intended to protect children from harmful chemicals.** The provisions in this bill improve the information that will be available to Vermont consumers about whether a children's product contains a known toxic chemical. It also improves the process by which the Commissioner of Health, after consulting with a diverse stakeholder group, can assess threats to children's health and consider whether or not to issue rules to regulate the use of harmful chemicals in children's products.

We, the undersigned, urge you to support S.103 by voting to concur with the Senate proposal of amendment, and oppose any amendments that would weaken the bill and undermine its goal of helping protect our children and drinking water from toxic chemicals.

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Professional Fire Fighters of Vermont

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American Nurses Association-Vermont

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Jill Charbonneau, President
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Martha Allen, President
Vermont-National Education Association

Lori Fisher, Executive Director
Lake Champlain Committee

David Mears, Former Commissioner of Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation; Associate Dean of Environmental Programs
Vermont Law School

Ken Rumelt, Professor of Law and Senior Attorney, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic
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