



The Alliance for a **HEALTHY TOMORROW**

262 Washington St. #301 • Boston, MA 02108 • ph 617.338.8131 • fax 617.338.6449
info@healthytomorrow.org • www.healthytomorrow.org

For Immediate Release MARCH 19, 2009

Contacts: Namasha Schelling, Clean Water Action, (617) 338-8131 ext. 204, nschelling@cleanwater.org
Elizabeth Saunders, Clean Water Action, (617) 338-8131 ext. 203, esaunders@cleanwater.org

Message in a Bottle: 8000 Demand Bisphenol-A (BPA) Ban, Call on the Governor to Ban Toxic Chemical in Children's Products

Boston—Alarmed that baby bottles, sippy cups, and infant formula continue to endanger the healthy development of children due to BPA contamination, MA residents delivered 8,490 consumer messages to Governor Patrick today. The Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow (AHT) called on the Governor and the Department of Public Health to protect children's health from BPA.

“We can't keep quiet on this issue; our children are suffering and depend on us to keep them safe,” said Cheryl Durr Patry, mother of 4 from Medfield. “As a parent, it is a high priority for me to see BPA banned. We need the Department of Public Health to hold the manufacturers accountable for safe products.”

BPA is the building block of polycarbonate plastic and is used to make baby bottles, sippy cups, teething toys, pacifiers, and many more baby products. BPA is also in the epoxy resins used to line the cans of baby formula and other foods. In animal studies, exposure to BPA is linked to the early onset of puberty, increased diabetes risk, obesity, depression, low sperm count, hyperactivity, and certain cancers, including breast cancer. The developing fetus and young children are in the most danger, because their body's systems are undergoing growth and development.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Bureau of Environmental Health has drafted a consumer warning on BPA, but this effort has been delayed repeatedly. However, a consumer warning does not go far enough to protect vulnerable populations. AHT is asking the MDPH to ban the sale of all products containing BPA, intended for use by children 3 years of age and under, that may be mouthed or ingested, and also to issue a consumer warning to avoid products containing BPA directed to pregnant women, woman planning to become pregnant, and those going through chemotherapy for breast cancer.

“The Patrick Administration needs to stop the damage being done everyday to the health of our children,” said Elizabeth Saunders, Environmental Health Legislative Director for Clean Water Action. “Parents deserve to know that products sold in Massachusetts are safe for their children.”

BPA mimics the hormone estrogen, and disrupts the body's endocrine system. Estrogen is an important chemical messenger and when disrupted, many systems in the body can be affected. In scientific studies, BPA-exposed animals have altered development of the male and female reproductive tracts, mammary tissues, the immune system, the fat tissue, and the thyroid. These animals are also at heightened risk of

mammary and prostate cancers. Finally, BPA-exposed animals have altered brain development, increased aggression in adulthood, abnormal play and sexual behaviors, and decreased maternal behaviors¹.

“It is now up to the Department of Public Health to stop ignoring the hundreds of government-funded studies showing that BPA causes harm and to start protecting our most vulnerable populations: fetuses, infants and children,” said Laura Vandenberg, PhD, a Research Scientist at Tufts who has published extensively on Bisphenol A.

Many states are currently working on legislation to ban BPA in certain consumer products. Suffolk County in New York State issued a sales ban on polycarbonate baby bottles and any beverage container sold for children under the age of three earlier this month; the first of its kind in the United States. Massachusetts has an opportunity to be one of the first states to take action rather than a state that leaves its children less protected.

“We in government have an obligation to take action when we see that people are in harm’s way,” said Senator Karen Spilka (D-Ashland), who has filed a bill in the state legislature to regulate BPA. “On BPA the time has come. The science is abundantly clear and we can no longer deny the need to protect the most vulnerable populations from this chemical.”

###

The Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow (AHT) is a coalition of 160 organizations and includes citizens, scientists, health professionals, workers, and educators seeking preventive action on toxic hazards.

1

Richter CA, Birnbaum LS, Farabollini F, Newbold RR, Rubin BS, Talsness CE, Vandenberg JG, Walser-Kuntz DR, vom Saal FS. *Reprod Toxicol.* 2007 Aug-Sep; 24(2):199-224. Epub 2007 Jun 26. Review.