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**Testimony of  
Michelle Noehren  
Events & Special Projects Director  
The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women  
Before the  
Children's Committee  
March 5, 2013**

**Re: H.B. 6526, AAC Toxics Disclosure and Innovation for Healthy Children**

Senators Bartolomeo and Linares, Representatives Urban and Betts, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) on H.B. 6526, AAC Toxics Disclosure and Innovation for Healthy Children.

H.B. 6526 would require the Department of Public Health to identify chemicals of high concern to children and would require manufacturers of children's products to provide notice to the commissioner if the manufacturer's product contains a chemical of high concern.

The PCSW's concerns about toxic chemicals in children's products are two-fold. First, many of the toxic chemicals used to manufacture children's products are endocrine disruptors, that is, chemicals that impact our body's hormonal system. Endocrine disruptors may produce adverse developmental, reproductive, neurological, and immune effects in humans<sup>i</sup>. Exposure to these types of chemicals starting from an early age can result in future negative health outcomes for girls. For example, the onset of puberty in girls, shifting the average from 11 years to 8.9 years for African Americans and 10 years for Caucasian girls, is linked to chemical exposure that stimulates sex hormones<sup>ii</sup>.

Additionally, many of these chemicals have the ability to cross the placenta and impact a developing fetus. Studies have also indicated that some toxic chemicals can be transferred via breast milk. BPA is one of the offending chemicals that both crosses the placenta and has been found in higher concentrations in breast milk. Research indicates that in-utero exposure to BPA can have damaging effects on a child's development and growth, among other things. As one example, relying on urine samples from nearly 250 moms and children near Cincinnati, Ohio, researchers found that BPA exposure during pregnancy was linked with anxious, depressive and hyperactive behaviors in girls in age 3. The higher the BPA urine levels, the more pronounced the effects.<sup>iii</sup>

Secondly, while there is much evidence to support the dangers of toxic chemical exposure in children, the PCSW is also concerned for mothers who are the primary family member purchasing products. Most mothers have no idea that toxic chemicals are being used in many of the baby products they put in their carts

because the common assumption is that products that can be purchased in the store have already passed some kind of safety testing. Unfortunately, that is simply not the case.

We applaud the committee's attention to the use of toxic chemicals in children's products. Connecticut needs a more comprehensive approach to this problem and this bill is a step in the right direction. Children should be able to grow up in an environment that is healthy and safe and mothers should be able to purchase products without fear of causing their children harm.

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<sup>i</sup> National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, Endocrine Disruptors <<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/endocrine/>>

<sup>ii</sup> Beyond Pesticides, Pesticides and Endocrine Disruptors < <http://www.beyondpesticides.org/health/endocrine.pdf>>

<sup>iii</sup> The Journal of Pediatrics, Impact of Early-Life Bisphenol A Exposure on Behavior and Executive Function in Children <<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2011/10/20/peds.2011-1335>>