



MEMORANDUM

To: Senator Edward, Chair, Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Senator Olsen, Vice-Chair, Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Members of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

From: Dr. Ruth Medak, Chair, Community Health and Quality Committee of the OMA
Members of Community Health and Quality Committee of the OMA
Courtnei Dresser, OMA Government Relations
Bryan Boehringer, OMA Government Relations.

Date: March 2, 2015

Re: Support of SB 478

SB 478 requires that the Oregon Health Authority create and maintain a publicly available list of designated high priority chemicals of concern for children's health that are used in children's products. A growing body of evidence shows that the synthetic chemicals found in children's products or containers used to store food and toys have the greatest impact on the health of children and pregnant women. We know from bio-monitoring studies that heavy metals, hormone disruptors and other toxics are present in our bodies. Studies of indoor dust and air find the same toxics in our homes and child care environments. And the people at greatest risk of harm from these exposures are our infants and young children, whose bodies and brains are not yet fully developed.

Despite ongoing research and bio-monitoring studies, families and the public continue to have limited access to chemical ingredient information for products they and their families use. The OMA supports the incorporation of the Washington State Department of Ecology's Reporting List of Chemicals of High Concern. Washington's current list of chemicals of high concern to children contains 66 chemicals and has been in place since 2011. Recent testing done by the Department of Ecology in early 2014 of products by manufacturers who report to the database, found that most manufacturers are following the toxic chemicals regulatory law; those found to be in violation are working with the Department to achieve compliance.

We believe this is a step in the right direction towards full disclosure of product components. The bill also allows the OHA to participate in the Interstate Chemical Clearinghouse, an interstate association that provides high quality and authoritative chemicals data to states, organizations and the public to foster the development and use of safer chemicals and products.

The OMA has supported past legislative efforts to protect the public and particularly children, from harmful chemicals in consumer products. The OMA had the opportunity to publicly support previous legislation on Bisphenol (BPA), one of the chemicals that will be included on this high priority chemical priority list. Products that contain chemicals like BPA, even in small doses, are known to cause chronic disease, cancer, infertility and learning disabilities. Oregon should not stand by and accept this burden on our health and especially on the health of our children- it is our responsibility to address the chemicals we know to be of great concern and work on solutions so that these chemicals are no longer a threat to any child.

SB 478 is comprehensive, and we believe, less onerous on the companies who manufacture and use these chemicals in Oregon products. While the bill does require the removal or substitution of a harmful chemical by the manufacturer, the OMA believes six years is sufficient time to modify the product. Parents and consumers will be able to make more informed choices about the products they buy and help create the incentive needed for manufacturers to improve their practices.

We believe this legislation represents a sound approach to managing Oregon's efforts in this arena. Aligning with other states and building off work already done by Washington's Department of Ecology is a pragmatic and more efficient means of identifying chemicals of concern. We urge your support of SB 478.

The Oregon Medical Association is an organization of over 7,800 physicians, physician assistants, and medical students organized to serve and support physicians in their efforts to improve the health of Oregonians. Additional information can be found at www.theOMA.org.