

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE  
DECREASE UNSAFE TOXINS ACT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 1, 2013

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (D.U.S.T.) Act, which would ban children's cushioned products that contain an unacceptable level of toxic flame retardant chemicals. In doing so, this bill would reduce infant and children exposure to these harmful chemicals.

This bill would set a maximum level of 1,000 parts per million for the toxic chemicals in the filling materials used in products, such as high chairs, strollers, bouncers, infant walkers, changing pads, and baby carriers.

Studies clearly show that exposure to these toxic chemicals may be associated with cancer, birth defects, immune disruption, reproductive disorders, hormonal imbalances, and neurologic and mental development disorders. Toddlers who crawl in the dust and put their hands in their mouths have three to four times the levels of toxic flame retardants in their bodies compared to their parents. This is at an age when their neurological and reproductive organs are still developing and they are the most vulnerable to the toxic effects of the chemicals.

In addition to the potential health hazards, flame retardants have not been found to significantly improve fire safety or prevent ignitions from small flame sources. According to data from fire protection groups, such as the National Fire Protection Association, no fire safety benefit exists from including flame retardant chemicals in these products.

Our current regulatory system does not protect our children from such toxic chemicals. We must act now to help reduce our exposure and protect our most vulnerable, our children.

The legislation has been endorsed by the Green Science Policy Institute, Women's Voices for the Earth, Clean Production Action, Physicians for Social Responsibility, First Focus, Environmental Working Group, Zero to Three, IKEA North America Services, and the U.S. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG), Children's Defense Fund, and Alaska Community Action on Toxins. I hereby submit for the RECORD letters of support from these organizations and urge the House of Representatives to consider this bill to improve the health of infants and kids in communities across America.

GREEN SCIENCE POLICY INSTITUTE,  
Berkeley, CA, July 17, 2013.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN DELAURO: The Green Science Policy Institute is writing in support of the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act that will be introduced in the 113th Congress. The DUST Act seeks to amend the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 to ban flame retardant chemicals from use in resilient filling materials in children's products.

At Green Science Policy Institute independent research and scientific integrity guide our mission to promote responsible use of chemicals, ensuring a healthy planet for current and future generations. We provide unbiased scientific data to facilitate informed decision-making about the use of chemicals in consumer products. We encourage scientists to use their research in the public interest. We are currently focusing on

reducing the use of unnecessary flame retardants due to their adverse impacts on human and environmental health.

Flame retardant chemicals are currently added to the foam of baby products and furniture to meet California Furniture Flammability Standard Technical Bulletin 117 (TB117). Flame retardant use in California furniture and juvenile products to meet 1B117 has not led to a measurable improvement in fire safety. The use of some halogenated flame retardants may actually decrease fire safety since they can increase the amount of soot, smoke, carbon monoxide and other toxic gases produced when a product does burn. The soot and smoke can impede escape and toxic gases, rather than flames, are the largest cause of fire deaths. Importantly, baby products do not pose a fire hazard.

TB117 is scheduled to be updated on January 1, 2014 so flame retardants will no longer be needed in children's product foam in California. DUST Act legislation will align with this important change.

Working in collaboration with researchers at Duke University and the San Francisco Estuary Institute, Green Science Policy Institute collected foam samples from baby products and found that 80% of products tested contained chemical flame retardants which are either known to be associated with adverse health effects or lack adequate health information.

Children and infants are most sensitive to the adverse health effects of these chemicals, some of which have been linked with reduced IQ, learning disorders, reduced fertility, thyroid disruption and cancer. Babies are born with these chemicals in their bodies and get a further dose from their mother's milk and exposure to baby products.

The average American home can contain pound levels of these chemicals. Flame retardant chemicals leak from products into dust. Dust gets on hands and food. Babies and children crawl, sit and play on the floor where dust settles. They explore the world by putting things in their mouths.

We urge Congress to adopt the DUST Act to protect infants and children from these unnecessary harmful toxins.

Sincerely,

DR. ARLENE BLUM,  
Executive Director.  
DR. VEENA SINGLA,  
Associate.

PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL  
RESPONSIBILITY—LOS ANGELES,

Los Angeles, CA, July 30, 2013.

Re Support the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act

Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO,  
Rayburn House Office Building,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN DELAURO: On behalf of Physicians for Social Responsibility—Los Angeles, we write to express our strong support for the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act that will be introduced in the 113th Congress. The DUST Act amends the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 to ban flame retardants chemicals from use in the resilient filling materials in infant and children's products.

PSR-LA is a 5,000 member strong organization representing physicians and other health professionals dedicated to promoting healthy communities and advocating for social and environmental justice. We have a long history of educating the medical community about the gravest environmental threats to human health, and working to eliminate health inequalities caused by environmental exposures.

Flame retardants chemicals have been added to the filling materials of children

products and furniture to meet the California Standard Technical Bulletin (TB) 117, which has become the de facto national standard for furniture manufacturers. Flame retardant chemicals continuously migrate out of household products and settle into dust, which is inhaled and ingested by people and pets.

Research shows that exposure to toxic flame retardant chemicals can be associated with increased cancer, neurological deficits, developmental problems and reduced fertility. Although some flame retardants were removed from children's sleepwear in the 1970s, similar flame retardants continue to be used in children products such as nursing pillows, car seats, sleeping wedges, portable crib mattresses, baby carriers, strollers and changing table pads, despite the fact that these products do not pose a fire hazard. Toddlers who crawl in the dust and put their hands in their mouths have the some of the highest levels of toxic flame retardant chemicals in their bodies. This is at an age when their neurological and reproductive organs are still developing and they are highly vulnerable to the toxic effects of the chemicals.

California is revising its TB 117 because of the strong evidence that flame retardants used to meet the standard have not provided greater protection from fires, and can in fact make fires more dangerous. While this standard revision is a positive change, companies will not be required to abandon the use of flame retardant chemicals. For that reason, the DUST Act is necessary to protect children from toxic chemicals, and we urge its immediate passage.

Sincerely,

ANA MASCAREÑAS,  
Policy & Communications Director.  
MARTHA DINA ARGÜELLO,  
Executive Director.

PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP  
(PIRG), FEDERATION OF STATE  
PIRGs,

Washington, DC, July 26, 2013.

Hon. ROSA DELAURO,  
Rayburn House Office Building,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN DELAURO: We write in support of the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act that will be introduced in the 113th Congress. The DUST Act amends the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 to ban toxic flame retardant chemicals from use in the resilient filling materials in infant and children's products. Accumulation of flame retardant chemicals in humans and animals and adverse health effects in animals have been well documented in a large body of peer reviewed literature. Studies have found associations between high levels and reduced IQ in children, endocrine and thyroid disruption, changes in male hormone levels and reduced fertility, increased time to become pregnant in women, adverse birth outcomes, impaired development, and cancer. Children are especially at risk for exposure to flame retardants in household dust because they crawl on floors and have the tendency to put hands, toys, and other objects in their mouths. In addition to the potential for adverse health effects from exposure to toxic flame retardants, infants and children to have critical periods of development during which exposure to toxic substances can cause increased susceptibility to disease, which might not become apparent until later in life.<sup>1</sup> Finally, adding flame retardant chemicals to baby products has not been shown to be effective in saving life or property.

Manufacturers put flame retardant chemicals into baby products to meet Technical

Bulletin 117 (TB 117), a unique California flammability standard for foam in juvenile products and upholstered furniture implemented by the California Bureau of Electronic and Appliance Repair, Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation (the Bureau) that has recently been revised to address concerns about flame retardants in children's products.

Recent research has detected flame retardants in the majority of baby products tested. A 2011 study identified flame retardants in 80 of 101 baby products from across the U.S. and from Canada.<sup>2</sup> Another study released in January 2012 found flame retardants in 17 of 20 tested baby products.<sup>3</sup> These tests indicated that chlorinated Tris is the most prevalent flame retardant in children's products in concentrations ranging up to five percent. The most prevalent chemical found is TDCPP, or Tris (1,3-dichloro-2-propyl) phosphate, which was removed from children's pajamas in the 1970s when it was discovered to be mutagenic. TDCPP was designated as a carcinogen by the State of California under Proposition 65 in October 2011 based on laboratory studies finding increases in kidney, liver, and testicular tumors as well as evidence of mutagenicity. Previously, a Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) assessment designated the chemical as a probable carcinogen. A 2011 study tested the chemical's effects on the development of brain cells and compared its effects to those of chlorpyrifos, a pesticide known to be toxic to the nervous system. By some measures, TDCPP was even more toxic to the cells than chlorpyrifos, with effects on cell development, number, and DNA synthesis.<sup>4</sup>

Adding flame retardant chemicals to baby products has not been shown to be effective in saving life or property. An analysis of fire data from 1980 to 2005 by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)—years when TB 117-compliant furniture containing these chemicals was sold much more in California than in other states—does not show a greater reduction in the rate of fire deaths in California compared to that of other states where the chemicals were used less frequently.

Fire prevention is the first step in avoiding the unnecessary and excessive use of harmful flame retardant chemicals. Fire-safe cigarettes, sprinklers, and smoke detectors, along with the enforcement of improved building codes, are all proven to be effective in reducing fire-related deaths. Good product design can also reduce and eliminate the need for chemical flame retardants by using less flammable materials or by placing a physical barrier between the flammable component and outside materials. Finally, safer alternatives to chlorinated and brominated flame retardants that still meet applicable flammability standards have been identified. The EPA recently acknowledged that there is no evidence to substantiate claims that the use of certain flame retardants has resulted in a reduced incidence of fires.

Thank you for your leadership in protecting America's consumers and children from toxic flame retardants. We urge the Congress to adopt the DUST Act to protect infants and children from these dangerous chemicals.

Sincerely,

JENNY LEVIN,

*U.S. PIRG Public Health Advocate.*

<sup>1</sup>Growing Up Toxic: Chemical Exposures and Increases in Developmental Disease. Frontier Group, U.S. PIRG Education. 2011

<sup>2</sup>Hidden Hazards in the Nursery. Washington Toxics Coalition/Safer States. 2012.

<sup>3</sup>Identification of Flame Retardants in Polyurethane foam Collected from Baby Products. Heather M. Stapelton, Susan

Klosterhaus, Alex Keller, P. Lee Ferguson, Saskia van Bergen, Ellen Cooper, Thomas F. Webster, and Arlene Blum. Environmental Science & Technology.

<sup>4</sup>Hidden Hazards in the Nursery. Washington Toxics Coalition/Safer States. 2012.

WOMEN'S VOICES FOR THE EARTH,

*Missoula, MT, July 24, 2013.*

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN DELAURO: We write in support of the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act that will be introduced in the 113th Congress. The DUST Act amends the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 to ban flame retardants chemicals from use in the resilient filling materials in infant and children's products.

Flame retardants chemicals have been added to the filling materials of children products and furniture to meet the California Standard Technical Bulletin (TB) 117, which has become the de facto national standard for furniture manufacturers. Flame retardant chemicals continuously migrate out of household products and settle into dust.

Research shows that exposure to toxic flame retardant chemicals can be associated with increased cancer, neurological deficits, developmental problems and reduced fertility. Although some flame retardants were removed from use in children sleepwear in the 1970s, similar flame retardants continue to be used in children products such as nursing pillows, car seats, sleeping wedges, portable crib mattresses, baby carriers, strollers and changing table pads. Toddlers who crawl in the dust and put their hands in their mouths have the highest levels of toxic flame retardant chemicals in their bodies. This is at an age when their neurological and reproductive organs are still developing and they are the most vulnerable to the toxic effects of the chemicals.

Based on recent studies and laboratory research, the California standard TB 117 has not been found to significantly improve fire safety or prevent ignitions from small flame sources. Furthermore, such baby products do not pose a fire hazard. According to fire protection groups, flame retardants have not led to improvements in fire safety and pose an unnecessary health hazard.

We urge the Congress to adopt the DUST Act to protect innocent infants and children from these harmful toxins.

Sincerely,

JAMIE MCCONNELL,

*Director of Programs and Policy.*

IKEA NORTH AMERICA SERVICES, LLC,

*Conshohocken, PA.*

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN DELAURO, We are contacting you as a follow-up on the letter addressed to you that I gave to Ms. Treefa Aziz when I met her in your office on April 26th, 2013. Please find the letter enclosed. We are wondering if your office is following the CPSC NPR for the 16 CFR 1634 Rulemaking? Please let us know if you have any questions in this regard. IKEA has extensive experience with flammability testing of upholstered furniture, both here in the US and in Europe.

We also write in support of the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act that will be introduced in the 113th Congress. The DUST Act amends the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 to ban flame retardants chemicals from use in the resilient filling materials in infant and children's products. IKEA actively work to eliminate, replace and reduce environmentally hazardous substances in our products and manufacturing processes. Our focus is to minimize

the impact IKEA products have on humans and the environment.

Sincerely,

MALIN NÄSMAN,

*Product Requirements & Compliance Specialist.*

FIRST FOCUS CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN,

*Washington, DC, July 22, 2013.*

Hon. ROSA DELAURO,

*House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN DELAURO: I am writing on behalf of the First Focus Campaign for Children, a bipartisan advocacy organization committed to making children and their families a priority in federal policy and budget decisions, to express our support for the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act to be introduced in the 113th Congress.

The First Focus Campaign for Children is a strong advocate for banning flame retardant chemicals from being used in filling materials in children's products. Flame retardant chemicals have been found in over 80 percent of children's cushioned products, such as strollers, changing pads, and high chairs, according to a 2011 study published in Environmental Science and Technology. These chemicals, such as organohalogen and organophosphorous, are toxic and lead to problems like reduced IQ hyperactivity, and birth defects. Other flame retardant chemicals found in children's products have been linked to cancer, immune and endocrine disruption, developmental impairment, and reproductive dysfunction.

Flame retardant chemicals are known to settle in the dust on the ground, making toddlers at greatest risk of being exposed. Toddlers play on the floor and put their hands in their mouth, ingesting the contaminated dust. Studies have shown that flame retardant chemicals are not necessary and do not significantly improve fire safety, nor do they reduce the risk of ignition from small flame sources.

The Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act helps to ensure the safety of children and infants by banning the use of flame retardant chemicals in the resilient filling materials in children's products. This Act would deem any children's product with flame retardant chemicals as a "banned hazardous substance" under the Federal Hazardous Substances Act if it is manufactured a year after the passage of the Act.

First Focus Campaign for Children applauds the introduction of the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act and we look forward to working with your office to help ensure that products are safe for children.

Sincerely,

BRUCE LESLEY,

*First Focus Campaign for Children.*

ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP,

*Washington, DC, July 29, 2013.*

Hon. ROSA DELAURO,

*Rayburn House Office Building, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN DELAURO, Environmental Working Group is pleased to support your Decrease Unsafe Toxic Chemicals (DUST) Act. The DUST Act is an important piece of legislation that would amend the Consumer Safety Improvement Act of 2008 to ban the use of certain flame-retardants in the padding and foam parts of children's products. The use of these chemicals is unsafe and exposes children to unnecessary health risks.

Many chemical fire retardants used in children's items can be toxic to human health. Maternal exposure to a type of chemical fire retardant known as polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) alters thyroid hormone levels and affect children's neurodevelopment.

PBDEs were withdrawn from commerce in the mid-2000s due to toxicity concerns, but replacement chemicals show worrisome signs of toxicity to human health.

Fire retardant chemicals have been added to products because of a nationally recognized safety standard set by California known as the Furniture Flammability Standard Technical Bulletin (TB117). But as evidence has mounted on the toxicity of PBDEs and replacement chemicals, experts have concluded that children's products do not pose a significant fire hazard, and TB117 is being revised.

Infants and children are especially vulnerable to chemical exposure, and coupled with the significant amount of time spent crawling and playing on the ground where dust accumulates only increases their direct exposure through inhalation and hand to mouth contact. A 2008 study of PBDE concentrations in American families found that young children had much higher concentrations of these chemicals than their mothers, presumably due to greater contact with fire retarded furniture and contaminated house dust.

The DUST Act would work to reduce the number of unnecessary health risks posed to young children by banning the use of certain flame-retardants in children's products. It would also treat any product manufactured on or after one year after the enactment of the DUST Act with more than 1,000 parts per million of a flame-retardant as a banned hazardous substance.

The commonsense proposals in the DUST Act will protect public health and our most vulnerable populations. EWG strongly supports the bill and looks forward to working with you to ensure its enactment.

Sincerely,

KENNETH A. COOK,  
*President.*

CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND,  
*July 30, 2013.*

Hon. ROSA L. DELAURO,  
*House of Representatives,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN DELAURO: The Children's Defense Fund applauds your effort to protect infants and young children from harmful chemicals during their critical developmental years. We offer our support of your "Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act", which will ensure companies do not use toxic flame retardants in the production of cushioned children's products. By classifying products created with such chemicals as "banned hazardous substances," the DUST Act will prevent children from harmful toxins via car seats, nursing pillows, strollers and other items.

For forty years, the Children's Defense Fund has worked to ensure all children in America get the healthy start they need to survive and thrive. This includes paying attention to environmental health hazards that threaten their health and development. Preventing the exposure of infants and young children to harmful chemicals during their early years is critical to their development. A recent study conducted by the Pediatric Academic Societies demonstrated that prenatal exposure to flame retardant chemicals is associated with hyperactivity and lower intelligence in early childhood. Yet toddlers have been proven to have the highest levels of flame retardant chemicals in their systems—higher even than adults. The developmental consequences of this continue after exposure; the largest cognitive deficits were observed in children over age five.

By reducing the amount of toxins young children are exposed to during their critical early years and preventing developmental delays, your bill strengthens the foundation

necessary for children to succeed later in life. We commend you for encouraging congressional action to allow all infants and young children a healthy start in life and so appreciate your ongoing leadership on behalf of children and families.

Sincerely yours,

MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN.

CLEAN PRODUCTION ACTION,  
*July 26, 2013.*

Re Support the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act

Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO  
*Rayburn House Office Building,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN DELAURO: We write in support of the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act that will be introduced in the 113th Congress. The DUST Act amends the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 to ban flame retardants chemicals from use in the resilient filling materials in infant and children's products.

Flame retardants chemicals have been added to the filling materials of children products and furniture to meet the California Standard Technical Bulletin (TB) 117, which has become the de facto national standard for furniture manufacturers. Flame retardant chemicals continuously migrate out of household products and settle into dust, which is inhaled and ingested by people and pets.

Research shows that exposure to toxic flame retardant chemicals can be associated with increased cancer, neurological deficits, developmental problems and reduced fertility. Although some flame retardants were removed from children's sleepwear in the 1970s, similar flame retardants continue to be used in children products such as nursing pillows, car seats, sleeping wedges, portable crib mattresses, baby carriers, strollers and changing table pads, despite the fact that these products do not pose a fire hazard. Toddlers who crawl in the dust and put their hands in their mouths have the some of the highest levels of toxic flame retardant chemicals in their bodies. This is at an age when their neurological and reproductive organs are still developing and they are highly vulnerable to the toxic effects of the chemicals.

California is revising its TB 117 because of the strong evidence that flame retardants used to meet the standard have not provided greater protection from fires, and can in fact make fires more dangerous. While this standard revision is a positive change, companies will not be required to abandon the use of flame retardant chemicals. For that reason, the DUST Act is necessary to protect children from toxic chemicals, and we urge its immediate passage.

Sincerely,

BEVERLEY THORPE.

ALASKA COMMUNITY ACTION ON TOXICS,  
*Anchorage, AK, July 29, 2013.*

Re Support the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act

Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO,  
*Rayburn House Office Building,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN DELAURO: We write today on behalf of the members of Alaska Community Action on Toxics ("ACAT") in support of the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act that will be introduced in the 113th Congress. The DUST Act amends the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 to ban flame retardants chemicals from use in the resilient filling materials in infant and children's products. ACAT is a statewide non-profit public interest environmental health research and advocacy organi-

zation dedicated to protecting environmental health and achieving environmental justice. Our mission is to assure justice by advocating for environmental and community health. We believe that everyone has a right to clean air, clean water and toxic-free food. We work to stop the production, proliferation, and release of toxic chemicals that may harm human health or the environment.

Flame retardants chemicals have been added to the filling materials of children products and furniture to meet the California Standard Technical Bulletin (TB) 117, which has become the de facto national standard for furniture manufacturers. Flame retardant chemicals continuously migrate out of household products and settle into dust, which is inhaled and ingested by people and pets.

Research shows that exposure to toxic flame retardant chemicals can be associated with increased cancer, neurological deficits, developmental problems and reduced fertility. Although some flame retardants were removed from children's sleepwear in the 1970s, similar flame retardants continue to be used in children products such as nursing pillows, car seats, sleeping wedges, portable crib mattresses, baby carriers, strollers and changing table pads, despite the fact that these products do not pose a fire hazard. Many times, the chemicals used to treat the foam in children products are not identified on the product labels or elsewhere. Toddlers who crawl in the dust and put their hands in their mouths have some of the highest levels of toxic flame retardant chemicals in their bodies. This is at an age when their neurological and reproductive organs are still developing and they are highly vulnerable to the toxic effects of these chemicals.

California is revising its TB 117 because of the strong evidence that flame retardants used to meet the standard have not provided greater protection from fires, and can in fact make fires more dangerous. While this standard revision is a positive change, companies will not be required to abandon the use of flame retardant chemicals.

Alaska Community Action on Toxics has been a leader in the campaign for effective fire safety without harmful flame retardant chemicals, through education, advocacy, supporting legislative measures in Alaska and working to reform national and international chemicals policy. For these reasons, we believe the DUST Act is necessary to protect children from toxic chemicals, and we urge its immediate passage.

Sincerely,

PAMELA MILLER,  
*Executive Director.*  
MARICARMEN CRUZ-  
GUILLOT,  
*Environmental Health*  
*and Justice Coordinator.*

ZERO TO THREE: NATIONAL CENTER  
FOR INFANTS, TODDLERS, AND  
FAMILIES,

*Washington, DC.*

Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO,  
*Rayburn House Office Building*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR ROSA: On behalf of ZERO TO THREE (ZTT): National Center on Infants, Toddlers, and Families, I am writing to express our support of the Decrease Unsafe Toxins (DUST) Act that will be introduced in the 113th Congress. The DUST Act amends the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 to ban flame retardants chemicals from use in the resilient filling materials in infant

and children's products (e.g. high chairs, car seats, changing pads and others).

ZERO TO THREE's mission is to ensure that all babies and toddlers have a strong start in life. For over thirty years, we have focused on translating the science of early brain development for parents, practitioners, and policymakers. We take an interdisciplinary approach and seek to underscore the fact that domains of development in very young children are inextricably related. We believe that "good health," as defined and included in our policy framework and priorities, is crucial for children to be able to develop, learn, and be ready for school. A baby's good health begins with her caregiver's ability to make sound choices about child rearing practices and use of baby products that can positively or negatively impact their child's development. In order to make these choices, caregivers need guidance resulting from evidence-based information about exposure to environmental and synthetic toxins.

This farsighted legislation will help prevent developmental delays in children that may be stemming from or linked to flame retardants. Research is showing that flame retardants chemicals are toxic to all human beings. However, the removal of such toxins is especially critical for pregnant mothers as well as infants and toddlers because they are more vulnerable to the effects of toxin exposure because of their rapid rate of growth. These stages are marked by rapid cell division and differentiation, organ formation, and brain development. This growth rate renders the systems particularly vulnerable to disruption. In fact, studies show that flame retardants have been correlated with negative effects to motor performance (coordination, fine motor skills), cognition (intelligence, visual perception, visual-motor integration, inhibitory control, verbal memory, and attention), and behavior (e.g. hyperactivity). Moreover, prenatal exposure to such toxins can result in miscarriage, birth defects, low birth weight, and preterm birth. In the longer-term, such exposure poses increased risk for development of childhood cancer, widespread disorders like asthma and obesity, infertility, and other child- and adult-onset diseases.

Flame retardants chemicals are added to the filling materials of children products and furniture to meet the California Standard Technical Bulletin (TB) 117. While California is the only state following TB 117, it has become the de facto national standard. Many national furniture manufacturers use this standard for all their furniture across the U.S. to avoid double inventory. Flame retardant chemicals continuously migrate out of household products and settle into dust.

Research shows that exposure to toxic flame retardant chemicals can be associated with increased cancer, neurological deficits, developmental problems and reduced fertility. Although some flame retardants were removed from use in children sleepwear in the 1970s, similar flame retardants continue to be used in children products such as nursing pillows, car seats, sleeping wedges, portable crib mattresses, baby carriers, strollers and changing table pads. Toddlers who crawl in the dust and put their hands in their mouths have the highest levels of toxic flame retardant chemicals in their bodies. This is at an age when their neurological and reproductive organs are still developing and they are the most vulnerable to the toxic effects of the chemicals.

Based on recent studies and laboratory research, the California standard TB 117 has not been found to significantly improve fire safety or prevent ignitions from small flame sources. Furthermore, such baby products do not pose a fire hazard. According to fire pro-

tection groups, flame retardants have not led to improvements in fire safety and pose an unnecessary health hazard.

We urge the Congress to adopt the DUST Act to protect innocent infants and children from these harmful toxins. The DUST Act translates the compelling research into preventive policy and legislation that helps promote positive, healthy development that will resonate throughout a child's school career and life, increasing their individual well-being and future contributions to society.

Sincerely,

MATTHEW MELMED,  
*Executive Director.*

RECOGNIZING THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOY SCOUT TROOP 401 OF AUBURN, WASHINGTON

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, August 1, 2013*

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 90th anniversary of Boy Scout Troop 401 of Auburn, Washington on August 10, 2013. Troop 401 is one of the longest running Boy Scout Troops in its council and in the state. Beginning as Troop 1, under Scoutmaster Harlan R. Stone 90 years ago, they remain a strong and visible presence in the Auburn community.

On this momentous occasion, I'd like to personally thank Boy Scout Troop 401 for its outreach to the community and its service to the Auburn area. Each time I return to my District, Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of the incredible work of the Boy Scout Troops in our communities. For almost a century, Troop 401 has helped make future leaders of this country by combining educational activities with lifelong values of service and ensuring they have fun in the process. Investing in our youth is the key to building a more conscientious, responsible, and productive society.

Mr. Speaker, Boy Scout Troop 401 is a unique and dedicated group of young men. Their true impact is immeasurable and their outreach and accomplishments are legendary. Here's to the next 90 years, Mr. Speaker.

Special recognition belongs to the current Scouts and Scout Leaders of Troop 401. They are listed below.

Scouts: Andrew Armatas, Andrew Fischer, Brandon Griffin, Brandon Clark, Conner Whitlock, Connor Perius, Dalton Blair, D'Angelo Washington, David Barnett, Dennis Nugent, Dominic Nelson, Gavin Skaar, George Gibson, Gunter Rice, Guy Adamo, Hunter Danz, Hunter Whitlock, Isaac Park, Jacob Wheeler, Jarrett Floyd, Joey Cushing, Joshua Blair, Judah Stelzer, Justin Higginson, Kaelub Graevell, Kolby McCue, Kyle Wilkins, Lee Vandenberg, Marshall Barnhart, Matthew Higdon, Mikko Holcomb, Nicholas Mayer, Noah Koester, Spencer Jones, Steven Ernst, Steven Frank, Thomas Snyder, Tyler Cushing, Tyler Hayes, Tyler Schef, Wyatt Bishop, and Zane Barnhart.

Scout Leaders: Chris Cushing, Craig Koester, Daniel Whitlock, Dave Bishop, Gordon Blair, Holly Jones, James Nannery, John Wilson, Julie Fischer, Kevin Fischer, Kim Cushing, Laura Higdon, Laura Whitlock, Margrett Everitt, Michael Jones, Mitchell Gering, Nick Perius, Rex Frank, Sharon D'Adams, Stacey Bishop, Terri Danz, Tiffany Hopkins, and Will Cadra.

MONTESSORI ACADEMY OF  
PEMBROKE PINES

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, August 1, 2013*

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the newly expanded Montessori Academy in Pembroke Pines, FL.

As the 2013–2014 academic term commences, the Montessori Academy will educate students from infancy through middle school, with the goal of preparing them to be lifelong learners and responsible citizens of the world community.

A quality education equips our youth with the skills they need to succeed in life, including critical thinking skills for inside and outside the classroom. Students attending the Montessori Academy will be able to take advantage of the new elementary and middle school classrooms, labs, arts and media centers, computer labs, and gymnasium.

As a parent of three students in Broward County schools, I am grateful for every fantastic teacher, school leader, and professional working to make a difference in the lives of our children. Education is not only the right of every child; it is the cornerstone of America's future.

I wish the Montessori Academy the best as faculty, staff, students, and parents prepare for a successful school year. Go Eagles!

HONORING MEDICARE'S 48TH  
BIRTHDAY

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, August 1, 2013*

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 48 years of Medicare's existence.

The benefits Medicare has brought to older Americans are almost boundless. Millions of Americans have lived longer, more productive, healthier lives because of the medical care they received under this program. Many would have incurred financial ruin, suffered needlessly and died prematurely otherwise.

I voted for Medicare during my first summer as a congressman, back in 1965, during a time that was very different from the America of today.

For several years, President Lyndon Johnson had been calling for Congressional action to address the overwhelming need to extend medical care to all seniors, as only half of older adults had any health insurance during that era.

Responding to President Johnson's call for a Medicare bill, and following my own convictions, I joined with Rep. Cecil King of California and introduced in January of 1965, as my very first piece of legislation, a bill that would have provided hospital care under Social Security and an increase of benefits.