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C4CC Warns of Unintended Consequences of Feinstein Bill Chemical Ban Exposes Children to Untested Toy Softeners

WASHINGTON, DC - Consumers for Competitive Choice (C4CC) Executive Director Jim Conran today urged the U.S. Senate to oppose legislation introduced by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) to ban phthalates from being used in children's toys. Diisononyl phthalate (DINP) is a thoroughly tested and scientifically proven safe softener that is commonly used in infant toys.

"With the recent horror stories about lead paint and Aquadots, why would Congress pass a law banning something that has been proven safe by government regulators?" **Conran asked.** "And if that isn't crazy enough, this legislation may force toy manufacturers to use untested and potentially dangerous chemicals."

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission spent four years studying DINP and concluded that there is "no demonstrated health risk" from its use in toys and "no justification" for banning its use. Scientists for The European Union and National Institutes of Health have reached similar conclusions about the safety of DINP.

Of the seven most probable alternatives to DINP, none has been approved for use in children's toys by a government regulatory or scientific agency. None of the alternatives have been thoroughly assessed for risk to human health by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Centers for Disease Control or the European Union.

"Senator Feinstein will say that the European Union's ban of DINP proves that alternatives exist," added Conran. "What she can't say is that a government authority conducted a thorough review of any of those alternatives and found them safe for use in children's toys."

Consumers are concerned when they learn of the politically driven call to ban DINP. **Amanda McGannon, working mother of two young boys is a member of C4CC.** "As a busy, working mother, I worry constantly about what is safe for my children and I depend upon government agencies to help me decide what is safe for my kids to eat, the right car seat to use and what toys are safe. That's why I am listening to the Consumer Product Safety Commission when it comes to what chemicals are safe. What I want to know is, if they ban a safe chemical, what will they replace it with?"

Probable DINP Alternatives

ATBC = acetyl tributyl citrate

COMGHA = acetylated monoglycerides of fully hydrogenated castor oil, "Soft 'n' Safe"

DINCH = di-isononyl-cyclohexane-1,2-dicarboxylate

DOTP = dioctyl terephthalate;

ESO = epoxidized soybean oil;
M II = mesamoll II
TOTM = tris (2-Ethylhexyl) trimellitate

Aqua Dots Recall 2007 - The toy was subject to a multi-national product recall after it was found that a Chinese toy manufacturer had substituted a cheaper chemical for the specified one in some shipped toys. The non-toxic chemical 1.5-pentanediol, a viscous oily liquid used as a solvent, was replaced with 1.4-butanediol, which when ingested is metabolized into the drug gamma-Hydroxybutyric acid (GHB is an anesthetic which is misused as a recreational drug and date rape drug). **The chemically changed product resulted in the illness and hospitalization of some children who ingested the beads.** This is the type of reaction that could result from replacing a known, tested substance with a lesser known alternative.

For more information about the safety of DINP and the danger of alternative plasticizers visit www.consumers4choice.org

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