



**Alliance for a
Healthy Tomorrow**



Protect children, families and firefighters from toxic flame retardants

An Act to protect children, firefighters and families from toxic flame retardants

S.1175 (Sen. Cynthia Stone Creem)

H.1245 (Rep. Marjorie Decker)

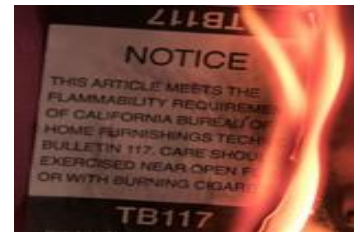
Background:

Toxic flame retardants are added to highchairs, car seats, nursing pads, furniture, carpet pads, electronic equipment (including toys), and many more common household products. These chemicals do not stay in the products; they get out into the dust in our homes and the air that we breathe, and ultimately into our bodies.

Firefighters are exposed to flame retardants when they go into burning buildings. Children's developing bodies are much more vulnerable to the health risks associated with flame retardants than adults. Their tendency to touch their faces and mouths add to the danger and put them at even greater risk.

Worse, these flame retardants—which are linked to cancer, nervous system damage, decreased fertility, and other health problems—are ineffective at stopping fires.

Commonly used flame retardants such as Firemaster 550 and Chlorinated Tris—which was banned from children's pajamas in the 1970s) have been found to be extremely persistent—they take a long time to break down in the environment and in our bodies. They've been found in many likely and unlikely places including the blood of new born babies and ice in the arctic.



Fortunately, there are ways to make furniture more fire safe and less toxic, like using less flammable materials and safer alternative chemicals. Many companies are already doing so.

As scientific studies provide mounting evidence of health risks associated with toxic flame retardant chemicals, increasing public concern has pushed manufacturers and retailers to take steps on their own to eliminate these toxins from their products. In fact, this February our nation's biggest furniture retailer and manufacturer, Ashley Furniture announced plans to phase out flame retardant chemicals from its products.

What these bills will do:

S.1175 and H.1245 will require manufacturers and retailers to cease the use of 10 toxic flame retardants in children's products and residential upholstered furniture.

Both bills give the Department of Environmental Protection the authority to restrict additional flame retardant chemicals if they are linked to serious health problems and Massachusetts residents are in danger of being exposed. This will help ensure that companies don't just switch to an equally harmful flame retardant.

Massachusetts is not alone!

Thirteen states have banned one or more flame retardant chemicals for use in children's products and/or residential furniture. One group, PBDEs, contains chemicals that are so widely regarded as toxic that they have been banned in 172 countries.

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