



**Alliance for a Healthy
Tomorrow**



An Act to Require Environmentally Safe Alternatives to Harmful Cleaning Products

MA Legislation

H.2479 (Representative Frank Smizik) Joint Committee on Public Health

Background:

Toxic cleaning chemicals threaten the health of the workers who use them and the children and adults who live, work or study in the buildings where they are used. Scientific studies have found that cleaning chemicals have been linked to asthma, certain types of cancers, reproductive problems, stillbirths, and birth defects. Safer cleaning products are already in use in many public buildings and schools, demonstrating that they are effective, available, and feasible. The use of safer cleaning products can be good for the economy. Businesses and institutions using safer products can save on health care costs for workers and Massachusetts businesses that make safer cleaning products can grow their customer base.



What the Bill does:

This bill will require the use of safer cleaning products in schools, day care centers, and public buildings or common areas of public housing in Massachusetts. The alternative cleaning products must meet the environmentally preferable purchasing criteria set by the state Operational Services Division. This criteria is set to protect public health; it includes products which are not toxic to humans, and that do not contain any ingredients which are carcinogens or which are known to cause reproductive toxicity, ingredients that pollute air quality both indoors and out, and other ingredients especially harmful to the environment or major climate change inducers.



Those who clean schools and public buildings are exposed to hazardous chemicals when working with toxic cleaning products. These workers deserve protection as do the people who use the facilities they clean. We need smart legislation that fosters economic growth while protecting human health and the environment.

Massachusetts does not stand alone!

The Boston Public School System has established a Green Cleaners Policy; a commitment to purchasing green cleaning products. Boston Public Schools include 128 schools and approximately 57,000 students along with teachers, administration, and custodial staff. This commitment to purchasing environmentally friendly cleaning products will improve public health and benefit the environment as well as foster a competitive market for green cleaning.

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