



NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

April 4, 2011

Senator Curren Price  
Chair, Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee  
State Capitol, Room 2053  
Sacramento CA 95814

**Re: SB 147 (Leno) Consumer Choice Fire Safety Act - SUPPORT**

Dear Chairman Price and Committee Members:

On behalf of NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council), which has 1.3 million members and activists, more than 250,000 of whom are Californians, we are writing in support for SB 147 by Senator Leno, the Consumer Choice Fire Safety Act.

This bill is an essential step to correct the outdated flammability standard that has led to the use of toxic flame retardants in consumer products in California.

Technical Bulletin 117 (TB 117), a California state flammability standard that requires the foam in furniture and baby products to resist an open flame for twelve seconds, has led to the annual use of millions of pounds of fire retardant chemicals in California. Halogenated fire retardants, which are the least expensive and most likely chemicals used to meet this regulation, have been linked to endocrine disruption, neurological and developmental impairments, cancer, birth defects, learning disabilities such as attention deficit disorder and hyperactivity, and a host of other health disorders. The chemicals migrate from products in the home into household dust, humans, pets, and the environment. Toddlers, who are particularly vulnerable, have a 3 times higher level of flame retardants in their bodies compared to their parents, and California children have some of the highest levels measured.

There is no impartial data to support the myth promoted by the chemical industry that flame retardants are effective in preventing furniture fire deaths. In fact, flame retardant treated foam ignites after seconds and gives off high levels of carbon monoxide, soot and smoke, which are the major causes of fire deaths.

SB 147 will address this problem by calling for an alternative flammability standard that can be met without the use of chemical fire retardants, and that does not compromise fire safety.

The Consumer Choice Fire Safety Act will protect our state from both fires and the harmful health and environmental effects of fire retardant chemicals. We urge you to support SB 147, for the health of our children, our workers, our environment, and all of California.

Sincerely,

Sarah Janssen, MD, PhD, MPH  
Senior Scientist

Victoria Rome  
California Advocacy Deputy Director

cc: Senator Leno