

SUPPORT

LD 902 – Resolve, Regarding Legislative Review of Major Substantive Rule Designating Bisphenol-A as a Priority Chemical and Regulation of Bisphenol-A in Children's Products

Sponsor: Representative WELSH of Rockport (for the Department of Environmental Protection)

Summary: This resolve authorizes final adoption of a rule to prohibit the use of Bisphenol-A (BPA) in infant formula and baby food packaging.

Explanation: This Resolve is the final step needed for adoption of a rule approved unanimously by the Maine Board of Environmental Protection in January 2013. The rule bans the use of BPA in packaging for infant formula and baby food.

This rule was initiated at the insistence of over 800 concerned Maine citizens who petitioned the Department of Environmental Protection. The original proposed citizen-initiated rule also would have restricted BPA in food intended or marketed for toddlers. Although that portion of the rule was not approved by the Board, the final adopted language was stronger than what was recommended by the DEP. We believe the rule before the Legislature would establish critical protections for babies from the health risks of BPA, which is why we strongly support it. .

BPA is found in the linings of metal cans and metal jar lids. The Board's vote confirmed the overwhelming scientific evidence that BPA is harmful to human health, that food packaging for infant formula and baby food exposes young children to BPA, and that safer alternatives are available. Because the rule change is considered major substantive, it requires approval of the Legislature before it can be adopted.

BPA is a widely used synthetic chemical that causes learning and developmental disabilities and has been linked to cancer. Manufacturers line the inside of canned food and the metal lids of glass jars with this endocrine-disrupting chemical, which then leaches into food—which is a major concern when the food is infant formula or baby food, because babies are most susceptible to BPA's harmful health effects.

The change to Maine's rules will ensure that the infant formula and baby food on store shelves is safe from this known toxin.

NRCM Supports LD 902