



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Ban on potentially carcinogenetic chemicals passed by Senate

SB 596 phases out use of Deca-BDE; studies suggest the chemical poses serious health risks

SALEM – A phased-in ban of a flame retardant commonly found in mattresses and other household products was passed by the Oregon Senate this morning. SB 596 adds Deca-BDE to the list of hazardous substances currently being phased out of the market due to potential public health risks.

“There is a lot that we do not know about the toxins in our everyday life, but the evidence on Deca-BDE suggests that it could pose serious, long-term affects to our health,” said Senator Mark Hass (D-Beaverton), chief sponsor of the legislation.

Brominated diphenyl ethers (BDEs) migrate from their host products into the environment and eventually into our bodies, where they build up in the fat tissue of people and animals. Studies show that Deca-BDE breaks down over time into more toxic forms, Penta-BDE and Octa-BDE, both of which have been determined to have serious negative health effects and were similarly phased out of the market in Oregon through legislation passed in 2005.

“As long as there are safe alternatives out there to this product, I can think of no reason why we would want to risk exposing our children and ourselves to Deca-BDE,” said Deputy Majority Leader Laurie Monnes Anderson (D-Gresham), who sponsored the 2005 legislation banning certain BDEs.

While Deca-BDE is still widely used as a flame retardant in a number of products, resorcinol bisdiphenyl phosphate (RDP) is a safer, technically feasible alternative to Deca-BDE. Oregon follows Maine and Washington in their restrictive use of Deca-BDE.

The bill will now go to the House for consideration.

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