



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Senate Democrats applaud EPA announcement to follow Oregon's lead, phase out Deca-BDE

Federal agreement follows 2009 legislation to phase out chemical in Oregon

SALEM – Senate Democrats welcomed news yesterday that the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) had reached an agreement with chemical manufacturers to phase out a toxic, endocrine- disrupting chemical, deca brominated diphenyl ether, otherwise known as Deca-BDE. Oregon's Senate Bill 596, passed in the 2009 session, phases out use of the Deca-BDE in products bought and sold in the state.

“We made the case during the 2009 session that using this chemical was an unnecessary risk for the health of our children and safety of our environment,” said Senator Mark Hass (D-Beaverton), chief sponsor of the bill. “When we heard this bill in committee earlier this year, the industry said that we should wait for a national standard, but in the end it was the states that led the way. This proves that legislation passed at the state level can make a big impact on the standards we set across the nation.”

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.

Senator Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland), chair of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee, credited the work of state legislatures like Oregon for putting pressure on industry to change their practices.

“This decision never would have happened at the federal level if the states weren't pushing to get this chemical out of products,” said Dingfelder. “The chemical industry spent millions of dollars lobbying to maintain the status quo, but as states stepped up to ban this product it made more sense for the industry to

stop making this harmful product in the first place.”

According to the EPA, the two largest American producers and largest American importer of Deca-BDE have “committed to end production, importation, and sales of Deca-BDE for most uses in the United States by December 31, 2012, and to end all uses by the end of 2013.”

“Senate Democrats have a commitment to protecting the public health of our families,” said Senate Majority Leader Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin). “SB 596 is a good example of how we can set a standard for environmental excellence nationwide.”

While Deca-BDE is currently used widely as a flame retardant in a number of products, resorcinol bisdiphenyl phosphate (RDP) is a safer, technically feasible alternative to Deca-BDE. With passage of SB 596, Oregon followed Maine and Washington in their restrictive use of Deca-BDE.

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