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***Toxic Toys Still on the Shelf:***

***Governor Vetoes bill that would eliminate toxic chemicals from consumer products***

*St. Paul, MN-* Governor Pawlenty vetoed a bill that would have protected Minnesota's children from toxic chemicals. The bill chief authors Senator John Marty (DFL- Roseville) and Representative Karen Clark (DFL-Minneapolis) passed the Public Health Omnibus bill (SF651) off both house floors with wide margins last week [93-39 in the House and 45-20 in the Senate].

The bill would have phased out phthalates, a known hormone disrupting chemical from children's products, such as rubber duckies, vinyl bibs, and teething rings. "The governor has disappointed Minnesota parents, and let down Minnesota's children" states chief author Rep. Karen Clark. "Children have the right to develop to their full potential, and these chemicals are a serious health threat."

Overwhelming peer reviewed science shows that phthalates are known hormone disrupting chemicals and have been linked to adverse health effects such as the early onset of puberty in girls and disruption to the male reproductive tract. Due to the peer reviewed science on phthalate exposure, other countries, including Mexico, Argentina, and the EU have already banned phthalates from their children's products.

Another provision in the bill would have eliminated a toxic flame retardant, known as deca, from home electronics, mattresses and textiles. Deca is a developmental neurotoxin that is chemically similar to PCBs which were banned in the 1970s. In peer reviewed science low dose exposure to deca has been linked to damage to the brain, liver and thyroid in addition to hormone disruption.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency found safer alternatives to deca that meet fire safety standards and are currently on the market. Ninety percent of computer manufacturers are phasing out the use of deca from their products; the European Union has a ban on deca that will take go into effect this summer.

“As professional fire fighters we support effective fire safety standards and are convinced that phasing out the use of deca will not compromise fire safety in any way,” stated Tom Thornberg, president of the Minnesota Professional Fire Fighters and a strong advocate for the bill.

The largest toy retailer in the U.S., Toys R Us, has vowed to be phthalate free by the end of the year, along with other large companies like Mattel and Wal-Mart.

“This legislation would have ensured that parents didn’t have to do a research project to find safe products for their families,” states Kathleen Schuler, co-director of Healthy Legacy. “It is disappointing that the Governor failed to protect Minnesota’s children.”

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Healthy Legacy is a statewide coalition of 29 organizations dedicated to safe products, made safely. For a full list of organizations visit our website at [www.healthylegacy.org](http://www.healthylegacy.org)