



Contact: Lindsay Dahl ldahl@iatp.org 612.870.3458 (w)
507.301.9679 (c)

FDA Decision on BPA Outrages Health Advocates *Scientific studies ignored on bisphenol A evaluation*

A broad spectrum of scientists, physicians, and children's health advocates expressed outrage with the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) announcement that bisphenol A – the hormone disrupting chemical found in numerous consumer products including food can linings and plastic baby bottles – is "safe." In laboratory studies, the pervasive chemical has been linked to obesity, developmental problems, diabetes, risk for heart attack, and several types of cancers including breast and prostate cancer.

The FDA's draft assessment relies on just two studies which were funded by the American Chemistry Council (ACC), Dow Chemical, Bayer and other plastics manufacturers. Not only does this assessment ignore the dozens of other studies done by independent scientists which have found evidence of harm, but FDA's conclusions are in direct conflict with two National Institutes of Health reviews and the actions of its counterpart in Canada.

"At the end of the day parents don't want to have to do a research project to find safe products for their families," states **Kathleen Schuler, co-Director of Minnesota based Healthy Legacy**, "they expect government agencies like the FDA to err on the side of safety. For parents across the nation, this is truly disappointing."

The chemical industry's efforts to hide or misrepresent the hazards of their product have been so over the top that even Congress has felt the need to intervene. Congress is now scrutinizing the communications between the ACC and a PR firm called the Weinberg Group whose clients have included the alcohol and tobacco industries.

Earlier this year, **Congressman John Dingell** (D-MI) said, "There are serious health concerns about whether bisphenol A is safe, not only for adults, but for children and infants. The tactics apparently employed by the Weinberg Group raise serious questions about whether science is for sale at these consulting groups, and the effect this faulty science might have on the public health."

Congressman Edward J. Markey (D-MA), senior member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee says, "The FDA assessment stands in stark contrast to dozens of peer-reviewed scientific papers that have found real health risks associated with exposure to BPA. On issue after issue, the Bush Administration casts aside concerns about public health and consumer protection in favor of commercial interests that benefit corporate America. Over the past eight years, the Bush Administration's mantra has been "In industry we trust." Since the regulators are asleep at the wheel, I've introduced legislation to ban BPA in all food and beverage containers, and will continue to work to ensure that it is enacted into law."

Union of Concerned Scientists conducted a poll with FDA scientists that indicated, in general, broad industry interference within the agency, and documented intimidation of scientists who may not have agreed with industry promoted decisions at the agency.

The FDA is bowing to the chemical industry's influence, and trying to convince the American public that this chemical is OK. There is clear and credible evidence, and more scientific studies, showing links to the very health effects we see on the rise today.

Many observers are seeing parallels between the tobacco industry's use of PR firms and hired experts to deceive the American public about harm from smoking and what is going on with the chemical industry today.

"The profits keep growing for Dow Chemical, General Electric, and other chemical and petrochemical companies in the American Chemistry Council that make bisphenol A," says **Mia Davis** with **the Workgroup for Safe Markets**.

"Scientists, parents and public health advocates agree," said **Janet Nudelman**, Director of Program and Policy for the **Breast Cancer Fund**, "There is more than enough science to be concerned about exposure to even exquisitely small amounts of BPA."

"A baby bottle that contains chemicals which may cause obesity, developmental problems, diabetes or cancer is hardly 'safe,'" said **Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner**, Executive Director of **MomsRising.org**. "When people buy products for their children, they expect those products to be free of cancer-causing agents and other toxins. For the FDA to undermine that belief by labeling as safe products containing chemicals that can cause serious damage to growing kids is unconscionable and a complete abdication of their responsibility to the American public."