

District Office:

24 South Des Plaines River Road
Suite 400
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016
847-257-0450
847-257-0452 FAX
enekritz@repnekritz.org



Committees:

Appropriations-Higher
Education
Elections & Campaign
Reform (Chair)
Environment & Energy
Environmental Health
Judiciary I - Civil Law
Medicaid Reform
Railroad Industry (Chair)
Tollway Oversight
Veterans' Affairs

Springfield Office:

238-W Stratton Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706
217-558-1004
217-558-4554 FAX
www.repnekritz.org

Elaine Nekritz
State Representative • 57th District

December 6, 2011

Senator Bill Wielechowski
716 W 4th Avenue, Suite 540
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Senator Wielechowski:

My name is Elaine Nekritz, and I am the Representative from the State of Illinois' 57th District. I am writing to express my support for Senate Bill 27, which would ban PBDEs in the State of Alaska. As a fellow state legislator who worked to pass similar legislation in my state, I would like to offer my experience as to what has happened in Illinois since the passage of PBDE legislation back in 2006.

As I am sure you are aware, PBDEs are persistent toxic chemicals that have documented negative health effects in humans, especially for infants and children. One concern that was brought up in committee hearings about our own legislation was that fire safety would be compromised for the other public health concern about the negative effects of these toxic chemicals. This perceived tradeoff is simply not the case. Manufacturers have a number of flame retardants that are used as safer alternatives to PBDEs, and there is no evidence that these alternatives do not meet required fire safety standards. In fact, it is in manufacturers' best interest to ensure that alternative flame retardants meet fire safety standards in order to avoid the financial exposure from litigation. Alaskans can rest assured that fire safety will not be compromised with the passage of SB-27.

Another concern that was discussed during our own efforts to pass PBDE legislation was the fear that the legislation would increase costs to consumers and hurt retail businesses and manufacturers. An extensive 2007 study by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency found no affordability issues related to replacing PBDEs with safer alternatives for consumer electronics, mattresses, or upholstered furniture. While there are affordability issues with regard to transportation materials, SB-27 specifically exempts transportation vehicles or equipment from the legislation. The simple truth is that since large markets like the European Union and many other states have banned the use of PBDE's in consumer goods, the economies of scale are already there for low cost safer alternatives. I do not anticipate any increased hardship for businesses or consumers with the passage of SB-27.

I wholeheartedly support your efforts at passing comprehensive PBDE legislation in Alaska, and support the passage of SB-27.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Elaine Nekritz".

Representative Elaine Nekritz
Illinois State Representative, District 57