



January 26, 2016

The Honorable Senator Mia Costello
Senate Labor and Commerce Committee
State Capitol Room 510
Juneau, AK 99801

SUBJECT: TOXIC FREE CHILDREN'S ACT SB111/HB199- SUPPORT

Dear Senator Mia Costello:

On behalf of the Breast Cancer Fund—and over 500 of our constituents in Alaska—I am writing to strongly support SB111/HB199 which would ban ten dangerous flame-retardant chemicals in children's products and furniture. Children, who are particularly vulnerable to the harmful effects of chemical exposure, deserve safety standards that provide a healthy environment for early development. This important legislation will reduce the exposure of children and families to flame retardant chemicals.

The Breast Cancer Fund is a national organization focused solely on preventing breast cancer by reducing exposure to chemicals and radiation linked to the disease. Today, an astonishing 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime. We work with advocates and decision-makers to encourage research and policy initiatives to better understand, and respond to, environmental toxins that contribute to increased rates of breast cancer and other diseases.

Exposure to flame-retardant chemicals has been linked to cancer, hormone disruption, lower IQ, reproductive difficulties, thyroid disease and other health issues. This bill is particularly important to the Breast Cancer Fund because research has shown that one class of flame retardants, polybrominated diphenyl ethers, has endocrine disrupting qualities and can both promote the growth of breast cancer cells and interfere with the anti-cancer effects of Tamoxifen – a common breast cancer therapy drug – in cell cultures.¹

Flame retardant chemicals migrate out of products into the air and into household dust and persist in the indoor environment, leading to human exposure. Young children, who often crawl on the floor and put their hands in their mouths, have some of the highest levels of flame retardants in their blood. Moreover, it's been shown that these chemicals aren't actually effective at preventing fires.

With the scientific evidence mounting regarding the serious adverse public health and environmental consequences associated with exposure to flame retardants, reducing exposure to

the chemicals banned by SB111/HB199 is critical. Additionally, passage of SB111/HB199 could have an important ripple effect by causing other states across the country and the federal government to follow suit and protect children from dangerous flame-retardant chemicals.

For these reasons, the Breast Cancer Fund supports SB111/HB199 and thanks you for your steadfast leadership on this important public health issue. Please contact Nancy Buermeyer, Senior Policy Strategist, at (415) 321-2919 with any questions.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeanne Rizzo".

Jeanne Rizzo, RN
President and CEO

¹ <http://www.breastcancerfund.org/clear-science/radiation-chemicals-and-breast-cancer/polybrominated-diphenyl-ethers.html>