



GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES
& SPECIAL EDUCATION
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April 1, 2019

RE: Letter of Support for HB 27, the Toxic-Free Firefighters and Children Act

Dear Co-Chairs Tarr and Josephson and Members of the House Resources Committee:

The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (the "Council") fills a variety of federal and state roles, including serving as the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act. As the state DD Council, the Council works with Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS) and other state agencies to ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families receive the services and supports that they need, as well as participate in the planning and design of those services. One of the duties of the state DD Council is providing comments on bills that may have an impact on individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their families.

To this end, the Council would like to issue this letter of support for HB 27, the Toxic-Free Firefighters and Children Act, a bill that would protect the health of Alaska's children and families by preventing exposure to toxic organohalogen, organophosphorus, organonitrogen, and nanoscale flame retardant chemicals found in children's products and upholstered furniture. The Council extends its sincere appreciation to Representative Tarr for sponsoring this important public health legislation.

We are aware that the federal Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) issued the following warning in 2018 about products containing organohalogen, organophosphorus, organonitrogen, and nanoscale flame retardant chemicals.

"The known adverse health effects of these chemicals to consumers include: reproductive impairment (e.g., abnormal gonadal development, reduced number of ovarian follicles, reduced sperm count, increased time to pregnancy); neurological impacts (e.g., decreased IQ in children, impaired memory, learning deficits, altered motor behavior, hyperactivity); endocrine disruption and interference with thyroid hormone action (potentially contributing to diabetes and obesity); genotoxicity; cancer; and immune disorders. These chemicals have a disproportionately negative health effect on vulnerable populations, including children."

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified harmful flame retardants in bodies of more than 90% of Americans. Exposure to flame retardants is associated with

adverse health effects such as cancer, miscarriages, premature births, neurological and developmental delays, and respiratory problems.

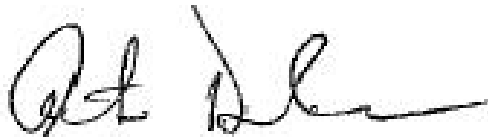
This provides significant justification for the Alaska State Legislature to enact HB 27. It should be noted that seventeen states are considering 27 policies in 2019 to ban toxic flame retardants: Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, Iowa, Indiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia.

We urge the House Resources Committee to pass HB 27 because prevention of neurodevelopmental and other adverse health effects is key to our mission. Thank you for your careful consideration of this critical public health measure.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maggie Winston', with a stylized, somewhat abstract flourish at the end.

Maggie Winston, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Art Delaune', with a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Art Delaune, Legislative Chair