

SJR

18

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



Co-chair, Joint Armed Services
Committee

•
Senate Resources Committee

•
Senate Judiciary Committee

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Senate Transportation Committee

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SENATOR BILL WIELECHOWSKI

SJR 11: Toxic Toys Sponsor Statement

Numerous recalls of children's toys and other products have filled the headlines in recent years. These recalls have also illuminated a weakness in consumer protection and child safety: the regulatory agency, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) does not analyze toys or children's products for the presence of chemicals linked to harmful health and developmental impacts, like lead. SJR 18 requests the federal government to test of children's toys for these dangerous chemicals.

The CPSC conducts tests to determine if a toy presents a choking, aspiration or ingestion hazard but relies on toy and child product manufacturers to self-regulate the materials used (and thus toxicity levels) in their products.

Recalls are mostly voluntary and occur when a company alerts the agency of a problem. This past summer, millions of toys were recalled because of dangerous levels of lead paint. The only federal law applies only to lead in paint—it does not regulate it in other materials, making lead in vinyl (PVC) products (like teething rings and baby bibs) legal.

SJR 18 requests that the materials used in toys and other children's products be tested for toxicity and to make the results publicly available to protect children, the public, and workers who handle the products. Please join us in protecting our children's health.



ALASKA CENTER *for the* ENVIRONMENT

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March 3, 2008

The Honorable Bill Wielechowski
Alaska State Senate
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Wielechowski,

I am writing to offer our support for SJR 18, "Requesting the President of the United States to direct the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission to test the materials used in children's toys and other children's products for toxicity and to make the results publicly available."

As you know, ACE is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization. Founded by a group of concerned Alaskans in 1971, ACE is the largest grassroots conservation organization in Alaska with over 6,000 members a vast majority of which are Alaskan residents. Thousands of Alaskans find expression for their conservation values through membership in ACE's values of balance, common sense, and long-range stewardship in managing our natural resources.

SJR 18 is an important statement that addresses a significant, yet clearly avoidable threat to our kids. Children are more susceptible to toxics in toys because of their size in comparison to adults. Children's organs are still forming and are more vulnerable to chemicals. Therefore, the dose needed to see the negative impacts of toxics in toys are less than it is in adults. Exposure to these toxics can cause serious health issues including interference with hormonal systems, disrupt testosterone production, cause malformed sex organs. Additionally, certain types of toxics are found to alter functions of the thyroid gland, brain, pancreas and prostate gland.

On behalf of our staff, board, and members thank you for introducing this important piece of legislation to protect Alaska's communities.

Sincerely,

Randy Virgin
Executive Director