



June 30, 2017

The Honorable Bill Quirk
 Chair, Assembly Committee on
 Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials
 1020 N Street, Room 171
 Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 258 (Lara) – SUPPORT

Dear Chairperson Quirk:

The undersigned organizations write to express our strong support for Senate Bill 258. This bill will require manufacturers of cleaning products to disclose the ingredients in their products on the label and on their website. It reflects the outcome of close negotiations between industry, workers, and NGO stakeholders, which achieves a balance that addresses a broad spectrum of concerns.

We use a wide array of scents, soaps, detergents, bleaching agents, softeners, scourers, polishes, and specialized cleaners for bathrooms, glass, drains, and ovens to keep our homes, schools, healthcare facilities and work places sparkling and sweet-smelling. But while the chemicals in those products foam, bleach, and disinfect to make our dishes, bathtubs and countertops gleaming and germ-free, many also contribute to indoor air pollution, are poisonous if ingested, and can be harmful if inhaled or touched. In fact, some cleaners are among the most toxic products found in the home.

Cleaning ingredients vary in the type of health hazard they pose. Some cause acute, or immediate, hazards such as skin or respiratory irritation, watery eyes, or chemical burns, while others are associated with chronic, or long-term, health effects such as cancer.

The dangers of unknown chemicals are not just present at home, but in the workplace as well. In fact, janitorial workers and domestic workers, especially house cleaners, have higher rates of asthma, respiratory illnesses, and birth defects than other workers.

Unlike food, retail cosmetics and drugs, manufacturers are not legally required to disclose ingredients in most cleaning products. Without this requirement, consumers and other purchasers are not fully aware of what is in the cleaning products they buy.

Scientific studies have shown that toxic chemicals found in cleaning products have been detected in urine, breast milk, and blood – including the umbilical cord blood of newborns. Given the serious health implications of these toxic chemicals, we deserve to know what is in the products we use and are exposed to daily.

Unsafe chemicals in cleaning products can pollute the environment when sprayed in the air or washed down the drain. In fact, the United States Geological Survey found residual chemicals of laundry detergents in 70% of North American streams. This evidence demonstrates the current damage inflicted by these chemicals on the health of our ecosystem and the threat to our environment for future generations.

We all deserve to know what is in our cleaning products, so we can make educated decisions about what is safest for ourselves, our families, and employees in the workplace.

SB 258 provides a clear set of rules for workers, consumers, and companies on how ingredients should be listed on the package of the item being sold, as well as online. While this won't solve all the exposure problems associated with cleaning products, this is a critical first step – one that Californians already think is current law.

We urge your support for SB 258.

Sincerely,

Breast Cancer Prevention Partners (formerly the Breast Cancer Fund) – Co-Sponsor

Environmental Working Group – Co-Sponsor

Women's Voices for the Earth – Co-Sponsor

Supporting Organizations

American Congress of Obstetricians & Gynecologists (District IX) (ACOGIX)

Beautycounter

Blue Green Alliance

California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative

California League of Conservation Voters

California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC)

California Public Interest Research Group (CalPIRG)

California State PTA

Clean Production Action

Coalition for Clean Air

Commonweal Biomonitoring Resource Center

Community Action to Fight Asthma (CAFA)

Consumer Federation of California

Clean Water Action

Courage Campaign

Friends of the Earth US

Meliora Cleaning Products

Natural Resources Defense Council

Pesticide Action Network North America

Physicians for Social Responsibility, SF Bay Area

Regional Asthma Management and Prevention (RAMP)

Service Employees International Union California

Seventh Generation

Sheet Metal Occupational Health Institute Trust (SMOHIT)

Sierra Club

Sierra Club California

Stop Waste