

# Businesses Changing Markets and Advocating for Policy Reform

David Levine  
Executive Director



American Sustainable Business Council

The American Sustainable Business Council is an advocate for businesses and business networks that support the education, administrative action and legislation needed to have a vibrant, equitable and sustainable economy.

## Partners



## Business supporters





## Campaigns

We use a range of strategies and tactics, including legislative testimony, Hill visits, media, sign-on letters, and educational seminars to identify and advocate policies that support a vibrant, just and sustainable economy.

# Sustainable Economy



Climate & Energy

**BUSINESS FOR DEMOCRACY** 

A collaborative effort of companies and business leaders in support of government by the people - and opposed to the *Citizens United* decision.



# A Sustainable Economy needs Green Chemistry

- Consumers are highly concerned about health impacts and want market change
- Key opportunities for innovation through sustainability and green chemistry
- New markets for a new economy
- Opportunities to grow businesses and create more jobs



# *How can policy be good for business?*

- Level the playing field
- Expand markets for safer products.
- Create a more predictable regulatory system.
- Reduce costs and risks, especially product liability, associated with managing toxic chemicals in products across supply chains.



# *How can policy be good for business?*

- Enhance productivity from improved employee health and lowers expenses .
- Increase trust among consumers, employees, communities, and investors, leading to a more positive business environment.
- Improve transparency and communication throughout the supply chain, leading to increased confidence for downstream users and reduced risks from supply chain interruptions.
- Create a more competitive, innovative, and economically sustainable chemical industry in the U.S.





# Safe Chemicals Act of 2011



## **SAFER ALTERNATIVES AND GREEN CHEMISTRY & ENGINEERING**

- SAFER ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM
- GREEN CHEMISTRY RESEARCH NETWORK
- GREEN CHEMISTRY AND ENGINEERING RESEARCH GRANTS
- GREEN CHEMISTRY WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM



# Actions businesses can take

- Business leaders Sign on Letter [www.asbcouncil.org](http://www.asbcouncil.org)
- Sign on to support Safer Chemicals Healthy Families [www.saferchemicals.org](http://www.saferchemicals.org)
- Reach out to your business networks
- Educate your consumers
- Share your business case with elected officials
- Get the story out in the media



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# naturepedic

## Safer Mattresses for Babies

By Barry A. Cik



# Chemicals are Pervasive

- Childhood Disorders
  - Manufacturers avoid responsibility because “Innocent Until Proven Guilty”
  - Physicians, scientists and government becoming involved
  - Chemicals correlated with asthma, allergies, cancer, autism, etc.
- Increased Awareness of Toxic Chemicals
  - Consumers skeptical of products provided by industry
  - Lesson from death of Lake Erie
- Low Dose Theory (e.g. Sprinkling Salt vs. Entire Salt Shaker)
- Cumulative Doses
- Synergistic Effects

# Warnings From Experts

**“We have come to understand that chemicals in the environment can cause a wide range of developmental disabilities in children.** In the words of pediatrician Herbert L. Needleman, ‘We are conducting a vast toxicologic experiment in our society, in which our children and our children’s children are the experimental subjects.’ (“The Developing Brain and the Environment: An Introduction.” Bernard Weiss MD, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, and Philip J. Landrigan MD, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York. Environmental Health Perspectives. Volume 108 Supplement 3. June 2000. <http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/docs/2000/suppl-3/intro.phpl>)

“... EPA has determined that infants up to age two are, on average, ten times more vulnerable to carcinogenic chemicals than adults, and for some cancer causing agents are up to 65 times more vulnerable... **children accumulate up to 50 percent of their lifetime cancer risk by their second birthday...** many chemicals linked to mutagenic activity are commonly used in consumer products and can contribute to children’s exposure to carcinogens.” (Children's Health Policy Review: “EPA Cancer Policy Revisions Highlight Risks to Children.” 3 Mar. 2003. Environmental Working Group. [www.ewg.org/issues/risk\\_assessment/20030303/index.php](http://www.ewg.org/issues/risk_assessment/20030303/index.php))

“Today, children are exposed to thousands of substances in the environment, most of which have never been tested for toxicity to children... The implications of this massive experiment in exposure are unknown. **Environmental toxicants are suspected to be correlated with many disorders** that, until recently, have been assumed to be genetic in origin... attention deficit / hyperactivity disorder, and autism are among the disorders that may be linked to environmental toxicants.” (Center for Children's Health and the Environment at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York. [www.childenvironment.org/factsheets/environmental\\_pediatrics.htm](http://www.childenvironment.org/factsheets/environmental_pediatrics.htm))

In October 2009, the Environmental Protection Agency highlighted the concerns regarding children being exposed to toxic chemicals. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson has gone on record stating that “A child born in America today will grow up exposed to more chemicals than a child from any other generation in our history... **Our kids are getting steady infusions of industrial chemicals before we even give them solid food.**”  
Read more: <http://naturepedic.com/education/quotes.php#ixzz1PxK6oQQX>

# Government Regulations

- TSCA: Toxic Substances Control Act (1976)
  - Most industrial chemicals grandfathered
  - Virtually no chemicals banned
- CPSIA: Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (2008)
  - Addresses various manufacturer requirements
  - Only restricts phthalates and lead
- Mattress Regulations
  - Law Labels (1920's)
  - Flammability
    - 16 CFR 1632 (1975)
    - 16 CFR 1633 (2007)
  - No regulations regarding chemical use
  - Industrial chemicals permitted to meet flammability regulations
  - Babies on mattress up to 15 hours daily x 365 days x 2 years

# Needed Updates To Government Regulations

While disposal of hazardous waste is relatively well regulated by RCRA, and while old contaminated sites are somewhat regulated by CERCLA, **the widespread use of toxic chemicals in consumer products and otherwise is essentially unregulated.** It is not possible to control the harmful effects of toxic chemicals without an overhaul of the TSCA regulations.

# Common Mattress Materials

- Vinyl and Phthalates
- Biocides
- PFC's
- Polyurethane Foam
- Flame Retardants
- Latex (including Coconut Coir)



# Healthier Alternatives Based On The Precautionary Principle

- Organic Cotton Fabrics
- Organic Cotton Fill
- Steel Innersprings (instead of foam)
- Food Grade Polyethylene
- Fire Protection based on more natural materials

# Design Priorities

**Priority #1:** No harmful chemicals

**Priority #2:** No allergenic materials

**Priority #3:** Natural, organic and renewable materials wherever possible

**Priority #4:** Practical design (e.g. easy-to-clean waterproof cover)

**Priority #5:** Third party independent testing and verification

# Certifications

- Global Organic Textile Standard
  - Certification for non-agricultural products
  - Fiber – minimum 95% organic
  - Accessories - nontoxic
- Organic Exchange
  - Certifies organic fiber tracking
- GREENGUARD
  - Tests and certifies to emission standards
    - Indoor Air Quality Standard
    - Children & Schools Standard
- SSA (Sleep Specialty Association)
  - Environmental and Safety Disclosure Program

# Advocacy Organizations

- American Sustainable Business Council
  - Advocates for stewardship, judicious use of resources, reinvestment, and attention to sustainability
- Safer Chemicals Healthy Families
  - Promotes wiser uses of chemicals in our homes, places of work, and products we use every day
- Healthy Child Healthy World
  - Recommends superior products that meet the HCHW Quality Standards
- Washington Toxics Coalition
  - Helps consumers choose safer products that protect health and the environment by eliminating toxic chemicals
- Green Business Network Leadership Forum
  - Promotes standards that reach beyond contemporary practices in addressing the needs of people and the environment

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