



SAFER CHEMICALS POLICY REFORM NOTES

July 19, 2010

Latest News. The House Energy & Commerce Committee is expected to unveil legislation as soon as this week to reform the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) for the first time in 34 years. BizNGO has been working to get language included in the bill that would require chemical suppliers to start providing information about the ingredients used in their products. Current law allows suppliers to sell products to manufacturers while providing little to no information about the chemicals in their products and the toxicity of those chemicals.

What BizNGO Wants. BizNGO has identified three measures that would address the need for greater transparency: 1) A requirement to disclose chemical ingredients across the supply chain (with confidential business information protections); 2) A provision to allow the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to collect chemical use data as needed for safety determinations; and 3) A minimum requirement to provide consumers with information on chemicals of high concern in products.

In the News. The White House Bulletin, Greenwire and others reported on a letter BizNGO – a business-environmental coalition – sent to lawmakers this week that said, “chemical labeling transparency throughout the manufacturing process will help boost consumer confidence in the products they make.” ... In an [item](#) for Huffington Post, Dr. Patricia Beattie echoed BizNGO’s call for transparency, asserting that toxic chemicals are finding their way into products because “many manufacturers simply don’t know the chemicals in their products.”

Op-Ed: Green Buildings Need Safer Chemicals. An op-ed in The Hill by Construction Specialties’ Howard Williams makes the case for federal chemicals reform, “Construction Specialties is a privately held U.S. company that designs and manufactures specialty products for buildings. Our environmental commitment is to create products that lower the environmental impact on the buildings they become part of and to conduct business in manner that endeavors to have minimal impact on our environment. Yet we are often challenged in meeting these goals by the lack of toxicity data on chemicals and the lack of transparency on the chemicals in the materials we purchase.” Click [here](#) to read the full piece.

Did You Know? TSCA has not been updated since it was passed 34 years ago, leaving the public exposed to chemicals that have not undergone sufficient health and safety testing. The EPA has only required testing on approximately 200 of the more than 60,000 chemicals that were on the market when TSCA passed in 1976. This oversight in public health protection must be addressed.

The BizNGO Working Group is a unique collaboration of business and NGO leaders who are creating a roadmap to the widespread use of safer chemicals in products. In 2006, twenty-two organizations from the environmental community and the electronics, health care, furnishing and retail sectors started the Working Group.