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## **LEADING COMPANIES, UNIVERSITIES AND NGOS SUPPORT NEW PRINCIPLES FOR SAFER, HEALTHIER PRODUCTS**

(Framingham, Massachusetts) Today a broad and diverse community of individuals from companies, universities, governments, and environmental health groups signed on to [The Commons Principles for Alternatives Assessment](#) -- a solutions-based framework to guide retailers and product manufacturers in reducing hazardous chemicals and continuously improving the safety of products.

In signing the statement, over [100 signatories](#) took a stand for safer, healthier products. BizNGO, Environmental Defense Fund, Lowell Center for Sustainable Production and Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Institute led the development and launch of the Principles.

The Commons Principles for Alternative Assessment establish reducing hazard as a key criterion for evaluating safer alternatives to toxic chemicals. As **Roger McFadden**, Senior Scientist and Vice President at **Staples, Inc.** emphasized, "We need a consistent and replicable framework for alternatives assessment. The Commons Principles give us an approach that starts from the inherent hazards of chemicals and progresses into economic and broader environmental concerns. This helps inform materials selection, reduce risks and drive innovation."

"The Commons Principles are a critical contribution to specifying how science can inform actions," said **Dr. Michael Ellenbecker**, Professor of Work Environment at the **University of Massachusetts Lowell**. He

added, “Our experience with the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Program demonstrates how the methodical assessment of potential alternatives uses the best available information to resolve trade-offs. It is a practical tool that businesses can use to identify and offer safer products.”

Momentum is rapidly growing for products made with safer chemicals. Consumers are demanding safer products. Scientific research is showing that exposure to some chemicals in everyday use pose serious health risks, including cancer, diabetes and infertility. Retailers and manufacturers are increasingly recognizing the need to act on this issue. [Walmart](#) and [Target](#) recently announced initiatives that reflect The Commons Principles, including calls for expanded ingredient disclosure, reduction and elimination of priority chemicals of concern, and safer substitution.

“A good chemical policy shouldn’t take us from frying pan to fire,” said **Sarah Vogel**, Director of the Health Program at the **Environmental Defense Fund**, “The Principles are designed to ensure that companies make smart, informed decisions as they shift away from hazardous chemicals that consumers reject, such as BPA and toxic flame retardants.”

“We see The Principles as embodying the race to the top among businesses, where increased transparency, reduced hazard, and taking action are core to any comprehensive chemical management program,” concluded **Mark Rossi**, Chair of **BizNGO**.

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### ***About our organizations***

[BizNGO](#) is a unique collaboration of business and environmental leaders who are advancing safer chemicals and sustainable materials, thereby creating market transitions to a healthy economy, healthy environment and healthy people.

[Environmental Defense Fund](#) is a leading national nonprofit organization, creates transformational solutions to the most serious environmental problems. EDF links science, economics, law and innovative private-sector partnerships.

[The Lowell Center for Sustainable Production](#) is a research institute at the University of Massachusetts Lowell that promotes thriving communities, healthy workplaces, and safe products as the foundation for a sustainable world.

[The Toxics Use Reduction Institute \(TURI\)](#) provides the resources and tools to help Massachusetts businesses and communities make the Commonwealth a safer and healthier place to live and work. TURI accomplishes this mission through programs in research, education and information dissemination.