

Great Neck Record

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NYS Breast Cancer Network: BPA-Free Children And Babies Act

After an intense period of negotiations among New York State legislators, we have a historic win for families across this state. New York State Governor Paterson signed the Bisphenol - A Free Children and Babies Act (S.3296H Thompson, Buffalo), and A.6919D (Engelbright, Setauket) into law, making New York the first State to pass comprehensive BPA legislation. The New York State Breast Cancer Network is proud to have participated in this process securing that New York State keep children's health a top priority.

Bisphenol-A (BPA) is one of the most pervasive chemicals we are exposed to in modern life. Mounting scientific evidence has demonstrated that brief exposure to endocrine-disrupting compounds and agents such as BPA during the development of the mammary gland, around the time of birth, and in puberty lead to changes and abnormalities that can influence breast cancer risk in adulthood. This legislation will ban the sale of pacifiers, unfilled baby bottles, baby bottle liners and cups, cup lids, straws and sippy cups to be used by children under age three for consumption of liquids that contain BPA.

The NYS Breast Cancer Network is the only network of community-based, survivor-driven breast cancer organizations in New York. The 25-member organizations of the Network, representing communities that stretch from Buffalo to Long Island, collectively reach over 100,000 New Yorkers each year with vital breast cancer information and support services. The Network also works to shape public policy in three areas that affect the breast cancer community: primary prevention/environment, access to quality care, and research.

"The New York State Breast Cancer Network congratulates Governor Paterson, Assembly Member Englebright, Senator Thompson, New York State Assembly Environmental Chair Robert Sweeney, and their colleagues in the Senate and Assembly, for their decisive response to the public's outcry to limit exposure to toxic chemicals with the passing the Bisphenol-A Free Children and Babies Act. There is ample scientific data supporting this important action which will help protect our children in New York State from this ubiquitous toxic exposure," said Andi Gladstone, executive director of the New York State Breast Cancer Network.

"This landmark legislation is a significant step forward in protecting the health of children and all New Yorkers," said Philip Landrigan, MD, director of the Children's Environmental Health Center, Mount Sinai School of Medicine.

"The passage of the BPA-Free Children's and Babies Act will go a long way in reducing our exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals. We recognize and applaud New York for taking the lead and know it will provide a strong foundation for the passage of (TSCA) Toxic Substances Control Act," said Karen Joy Miller, Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition, Inc., NYSBCN Environmental Committee member.

"It is important to recognize that powerful actions that we make today by banning BPA in children's products will affect the health of future generations," said Laura Weinberg, president of the Great Neck Breast Cancer Coalition, NYSBCN Environmental Committee member.

"The first step to remove BPA from our environment should begin with our most vulnerable population, namely our children. Capital Region Action Against Breast Cancer (CRAAB) in Albany is

very pleased to see the unanimous support from both the New York State Senate and Assembly", said Joan Sheehan, president of CRAAB.

"The Breast Cancer Network of Western New York is extremely proud of Senator Antoine Thompson from Buffalo for his persistent efforts which have resulted in the passage of the Bisphenol A-Free Childrens and Babies Act. This act will protect those who are the most vulnerable from exposure to Bisphenol-A and decrease their risk of breast cancer", said Alice Gray, President of the Breast Cancer Network of Western New York.

The Network has been in the forefront of the battle to remove hazardous chemical exposures for the most vulnerable of NYS residents—individuals with pre-existing conditions, pregnant women, the elderly, and children. Members of the Network's environmental committee, Laura Weinberg and Karen Miller, were instrumental in securing the passage of the first BPA ban in the nation, in Suffolk County in March 2009. The Network remains committed to advocating for broader chemical policy reforms for a safer and healthier environment.