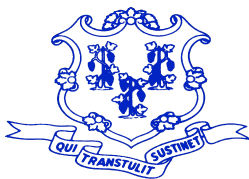


The Connecticut General Assembly



For IMMEDIATE Release
March 12, 2010

Contact: Rose Ryan
(860) 240-8527

REP. FONTANA CALLS FOR REMOVAL OF CADMIUM IN CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS

State Representatives Steve Fontana (D-North Haven) joined with other lawmakers, public health officials and children's advocates today to urge the legislature to pass a bill that prohibits the sale, manufacturing, and distribution of children's jewelry that contains cadmium.

"This legislation represents a reasonable and balanced approach to removing a toxic chemical from children's jewelry—a purpose that we should all share," said **Representative Fontana**.

Cadmium is a metal used in electroplating, pigments, and plastic that can have adverse health impacts in humans, especially children. It is currently ranked seventh on the U.S. Department of Public Health and Human Services priority list of 275 hazardous substances. It is a known carcinogen and has been shown to cause developmental problems in young children. The Chairwoman of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recently advised parents not to allow young children to be given or to play with cheap metal jewelry due to concerns over cadmium.

"The Connecticut Public Health Association strongly supports efforts to limit cadmium exposures in children to prevent any possible health effects and related diseases later in life," said **Annamarie Beaulieu, MPH, Campaign Director for the Connecticut Public Health Association**. "The evidence linking cadmium to certain cancers and reproductive disorders is very compelling."

Just yesterday, federal regulators called for the recall of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer charm bracelets sold at dollar-type stores due to their high levels of cadmium. This follows incidents in January where two major retailers pulled products made with cadmium from their shelves. Wal-Mart voluntarily recalled 55,000 children's necklaces made in China and Claire's, the jewelry and accessories store, voluntarily stopped selling a children's bracelet.

"The fact that toxic cadmium is currently legal to use in children's jewelry shows how our federal chemical laws are completely ineffective," said **Sarah Uhl, Environmental Health Coordinator for Clean Water Action**. "We commend the Children's Committee for recognizing that Connecticut must take the lead."

Connecticut currently bans packaging and packaging components that use cadmium from being sold or used for promotional purposes. However, the law is silent when it comes to using the same chemical in the actual products.

The Select Committee on Children passed House Bill 5314, An Act Concerning Child Safe Products and Banning Cadmium in Children's Products, earlier this week. The bill specifically bans cadmium in jewelry made for children under age 12. The bill now goes to the Environment Committee.

Several other states have moved in the direction of banning or limiting use of the substance, including Washington and California. Florida, Illinois, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey, and New York are currently considering cadmium legislation.

###

Rose Ryan
Communications Coordinator
House Democrats
Connecticut General Assembly
Legislative Office Building
Room 5000
Hartford, CT 06106
(860) 240-8527
Rose.Ryan@cga.ct.gov