

## **Breaking News on Supplements & Nutrition - North America**

Bill would ban BPA in packaging for infants

By Jane Byrne, 20-Jan-2009

A Washington State bill aims to ban chemical bisphenol A (BPA) in food or drink containers for children three and younger, including plastic baby bottles and cans of infant formula.

A hearing of the bill is scheduled for tomorrow in the House Environmental Health Committee, with a similar measure being sponsored in the state Senate.

BPA is used in certain packaging materials such as polycarbonates for baby food bottles. It is also used in epoxy resins for internal protective linings for canned food and metal lids.

### Research

A recent study by a team of UK researchers found that higher concentrations of the chemical in urine were linked with heart disease, type 2 diabetes and liver enzyme abnormalities.

And, in September, scientists from the US National Toxicology Programme said that effects on reproductive development from BPA in packaging cannot be ruled out.

The proposed ban would begin on 1 July, 2010 in the state of Washington, and if it came into force, would prohibit the use of the chemical in the manufacture or distribution of food and drink containers made for children three and under; it would also ban the use of BPA in reusable sports water bottles.

If passed, Washington would be the first state in the US to restrict the sale or manufacture of the controversial chemical in some products. A similar proposal in the state of California, during the summer, failed to go through.

Canada has already banned the sale of BPA in plastic baby bottles.

### FDA re-evaluation

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently announced that it is re-evaluating available data on the packaging component and planning to source additional information so as to strengthen the exposure estimates from all dietary sources of BPA, but particularly those relevant to infants and children.

The letter was the first response to criticism of the FDA by its own advisory board last autumn, which maintained that the food safety regulator ignored evidence suggesting BPA in baby bottles and formula cans could be damaging to children.

The review of the Science Board's subcommittee concluded that the margins of safety in the FDA's draft assessment on BPA in regard to the risks of infant exposure to the chemical were 'inadequate.'

#### Manufacturers' view

The North American Metal Packaging Alliance (NAMPA), in response to the criticism of the FDA, said that it remained confident in the regulatory review process to ensure public safety and protect public health.

"It would be a departure from accepted FDA practice for a scientific determination to be reached without a thorough and valid review, including access to the raw data," said Dr. John Rost, Chair of NAMPA.

He added that NAMPA encouraged the FDA to look at all studies to validate any findings.

The alliance maintains that the use of this chemical in the production of epoxy resins in metal food and beverage packaging presents no risk to consumers.

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