

Southern Maine Labor Council  
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Representative John Shimkus  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Paul Tonko  
Ranking Member  
House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment and the Economy

Dear Chairman Shimkus and Ranking Member Tonko,

The Southern Maine Labor Council is an affiliation of over 35 local unions representing almost 8000 workers in southern Maine.

We are dedicated to improving the lives of working men and women and their families in Southern Maine.

We are very concerned about what we think is a disastrous federal chemical draft bill that could come before the US House Energy and Commerce Committee. It is called the Chemicals in Commerce Act (CICA).

This draft CICA does not even include the word "safety" in its title. We are calling it the "No Safer Chemicals Act." The bill is worse than doing nothing for better protecting American workers, and our families, from toxic chemicals in both the workplace and at home.

The problems with the CICA include:

1. Preemption of state authority.  
The CICA would kill the Maine Kids Safe Products law, preventing Maine from protecting our citizens.  
Maine has worked hard in recent years to gain information on toxic chemicals in consumer products and replace them with safe chemicals.
2. The CICA would make it nearly impossible for EPA to require health information for new chemicals before they end up on the market and in the products we bring home to our families. This is the problem with the current Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA).
3. The CICA would roll back EPA's authority to restrict the use of existing toxic chemicals in products. It would continue to prevent EPA from taking action on asbestos.

4. The CICA would continue the use of poor criteria for regulating chemicals: the “unreasonable risk” standard and “least burdensome” method for regulating use of toxic chemicals. What we need is a health-only safety standard.

In summary, the Southern Maine Labor Council opposes the draft legislation called the Chemicals in Commerce Act (CICA).

We request that the draft not be introduced into the US House of Representatives as formal legislation.

Instead, we ask that the Committee draft a bill that will give us real reform of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA).

Sincerely,

Douglas Born  
President  
Southern Maine Labor Council