



REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH TECHNOLOGIES PROJECT

RHTP Calls for “Robust Chemical Policy Reform” *Vitter/ Udall Does Not Sufficiently Protect Public Health*

For Immediate Release:
March 17, 2015

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Washington, D.C. – March 17, 2015 – At a press conference today on Capitol Hill, Jessica Arons, president and CEO of the Reproductive Health Technologies Project, joined Senators Barbara Boxer and Ed Markey and supporters of their bill, the “Alan Reinstein and Trevor Schaefer Toxic Chemical Protection Act,” to call for genuine chemical policy reform. Ms. Arons issued the following statement in support of the bill:

“As an organization dedicated to protecting and expanding women’s reproductive health, rights, and justice, the Reproductive Health Technologies Project (RHTP) strongly supports robust chemical policy reform.

“While access to abortion and contraception are vital components of women’s reproductive health, so is the ability to have a healthy pregnancy. However, mounting scientific evidence indicates that numerous chemicals in our everyday environment negatively affect the reproductive health of both women and men through increased rates of early puberty, infertility, uterine fibroids, birth defects, and declining quality and quantity of sperm.

“Real chemical policy reform, such as that introduced by Senators Boxer and Markey, will give the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the necessary tools to quickly review and regulate harmful chemicals and to protect our most vulnerable communities.

“While we are all exposed to toxic chemicals, low-income women and women of color are more likely to be directly exposed to toxic chemicals at work, at home, and through consumer products. Increased exposure to these harmful chemicals means these women are also more likely to experience reproductive health problems that have been linked to toxic chemicals. Compounding the problem, women of color and low-income women are less likely to have access to health insurance or quality, affordable care to prevent and address health problems that may have environmental causes.

“This unfortunate reality underscores the need for meaningful comprehensive chemical policy reform. Unfortunately, the ‘Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act,’ introduced by Senators David Vitter (R-LA) and Tom Udall (D-NM), does

not sufficiently protect public health — including reproductive health, fetal development, and fertility. The current version of the bill would unnecessarily tie the hands of states to address toxic exposures, would reduce enforcement, and would make it harder for the EPA to keep a chemical it finds unsafe out of consumer products.

“In contrast, the ‘Alan Reinstein and Trevor Schaefer Toxic Chemical Protection Act,’ introduced by Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Ed Markey (D-MA), would allow states to continue to protect their citizens from harmful chemicals and would establish, for the first time in nearly 40 years, strong protections for women and families from chemical health threats.

“Chemical safety reform presents a rare opportunity for pro-choice and pro-life Members of Congress to work together to protect the health and well-being of women and their families. We urge Senators from both parties to work toward needed improvements so that genuine chemical safety reform can move forward.”

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For more about the Reproductive Health Technologies Project, visit our website at RHTP.org.