



*A Passionate Voice for Compassionate Care*

August 16, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senate Majority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States, I write in support of the Safe Chemicals Act of 2011 (S. 847) and respectfully urge you to bring this very important public health legislation to the Senate floor for a vote as soon as possible. This comprehensive legislation would strengthen the nation's system for managing chemical safety to better protect human and environmental health.

The Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA) is the nation's largest group of not-for-profit health providers, representing 629 Catholic hospitals and 56 Catholic health systems nationwide, which account for more than one-fifth of admissions in 22 states and the District of Columbia. The Catholic health ministry employs more than 750,000 women and men who deliver services combining advanced technology with the Catholic caring tradition.

This is an important issue for Catholic health care providers because of our commitments to improve public health, to provide safe health care, and to protect all of creation. Revision of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) is needed to protect public health, including the health of children and the unborn, who are especially vulnerable to the adverse effects of toxic chemicals.

There is growing evidence that chemical exposures lead to cancer, birth defects, asthma, developmental problems, and other serious health problems. Our organizations are committed not only to healing, but to prevention. Addressing the failures of the chemical regulatory system is one of the most critical initiatives to prevent disease and protect public health.

In recent years, Catholic health care organizations have taken steps to ensure that we deliver health care in a way that is environmentally responsible. We, along with other health care providers, have worked to eliminate the use of mercury, decrease hazardous and other waste, and be more energy efficient. As part of our commitment to be environmentally responsible, we need to know that the chemicals we use are safe for our patients, workers, and communities.

The Safe Chemicals Act holds the promise of reducing exposures to harmful chemicals and creating a more healthy future for all of us.

We applaud Senator Barbara Boxer and Senator Frank Lautenberg for their leadership in bringing the Safe Chemicals Act to a vote in the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee last week. We respectfully urge you to continue the momentum from this legislative victory by bringing this critical piece of legislation to the Senate floor for a vote.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the importance of this public health legislation, please contact Julie Trocchio at [jtrocchio@chausa.usa](mailto:jtrocchio@chausa.usa) or 202-721-6320.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Rodgers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael Rodgers  
Senior Vice President for Advocacy and Public Policy

cc: Senator Barbara Boxer  
Senator Frank Lautenberg  
Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell