

New Toxics Bill Would Protect the Health and Safety of our Families

The Breast Cancer Fund supports the newly introduced Boxer-Markey bill

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Contact: Ena Do, (415) 321-2903, Edo@breastcancerfund.org

Attention reporters: Nancy Buermeyer, senior policy strategist, at the Breast Cancer Fund and breast cancer survivor Marika Holmgren are available for interviews

SAN FRANCISCO – The Alan Reinstein and Trevor Schaefer Toxic Chemical Protection Act, introduced Thursday, March 12, by Senators Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., and Edward Markey, D-Mass., represents real reform that honors the millions of people who have faced breast cancer and other serious diseases linked to chemical exposures.

On behalf of the quarter of a million women and men who will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year and the 40,000 families who will lose someone they love to this disease, the Breast Cancer Fund wholeheartedly endorses the Boxer-Markey bill.

“More and more Americans are getting diagnosed, suffering and dying from diseases linked to chemical exposures,” said Nancy Buermeyer, senior policy strategist, at the Breast Cancer Fund. “Meaningful chemical policy reform will not only save lives, but it will also save American taxpayers billions of dollars in health spending; we simply cannot afford to do anything less.”

The Breast Cancer Fund vigorously opposes an alternative bill, introduced on Tuesday, March 10 by Senators Tom Udall, D-N.M., and David Vitter, R-La. and supported by the American Chemistry Council, because of its vast shortcomings in its ability to protect public health.

In contrast, the Boxer-Markey bill, offers comprehensive reform of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). The Boxer-Markey bill would:

- Require rapid review of toxic chemicals of high concern to human health or the environment with the chemical industry sharing the cost of the federal safety review.
- Require the EPA to consider all of the ways people are exposed to a chemical, reflecting real-world conditions.
- Preserve the EPA’s authority to regulate consumer products and monitor imported products for dangerous chemicals.
- Protect the right of states to more fully protect their citizens from unsafe chemical exposures linked to increasing rates of breast cancer and other diseases.

The bill was named in honor of asbestos-victim Alan Reinstein, who died from mesothelioma in 2006 and Trevor Schaefer, who was diagnosed with brain cancer at the age of 13.

The Breast Cancer Fund is committed to supporting legislation that lives up to the promise of protecting public health. We applaud Senators Boxer and Markey, for their vision and steadfast support of comprehensive chemicals policy reform. Our health is simply too precious to risk.

Marika Holmgren, a breast cancer survivor from Half Moon Bay, Calif., couldn’t agree more.

“We may not know everything about the 84,000 chemicals that are approved for use in everyday products, but we know enough to recognize the simple truth that we must eliminate those chemicals that are poisoning us from the shelves of our supermarkets and drugstores,” Holmgren said. “It’s vital that we take action to reduce

our daughters, sisters, and mothers' exposure to chemicals that increase the chances that they'll hear the same words I heard on February 1, 2007: You have cancer."

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The Breast Cancer Fund is the leading national organization working to prevent breast cancer by eliminating our exposure to toxic chemicals linked to the disease.