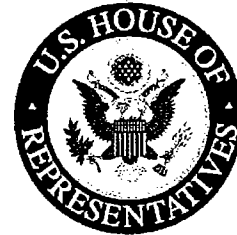


NEWS FROM ... House Democratic Leader

NANCY PELOSI

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Pelosi Statement on Study of Toxic Exposures in Newborns

San Francisco – House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi released the following statement today upon the release of a study "Body Burden: The Pollution in Newborns" by the Environmental Working Group:

"Today, I join Environmental Health Experts and Advocates in sounding an alarm. Everyone is exposed to toxic chemicals, even newborn infants, and something must be done. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Environmental Working Group and Commonweal for taking the lead in this first ever biomonitoring effort of newborn cord blood.

"For years, health experts have told pregnant women not to ingest certain substances, such as alcohol and smoke, that may harm their newborn babies. But today we learn that toxic chemicals in our air and water that are linked to cancer, brain damage, and other birth defects have begun circulating in their babies developing systems even before they have taken their first breath.

"This new scientific data shows that the developing reproductive, hormonal and neurological systems of infants are being disrupted by synthetic chemicals that we are exposed to every day.

"Nearly a decade ago, I requested a Government Accounting Office (GAO) Study on Environmental Health. The first report, published in 2000, revealed that the federal government collects very little data on human exposure to chemicals in the environment.

"Since that time, I have worked to increase the Center for Disease Control's funding for the biomonitoring of chemicals and a health-tracking system to provide epidemiological links between disease and the environment. I will continue to advocate for increased funding for the CDC biomonitoring program, and will reintroduce legislation with Senator Hillary Clinton of New York to strengthen biomonitoring efforts by the federal government.

"Just yesterday, the GAO released another report that finds the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is failing to protect the public from thousands of toxic compounds because it has not gathered data on the health risks of most industrial chemicals.

"Also yesterday, Congressman Henry Waxman of California, along with Senators Lautenberg of New Jersey and Jeffords of Vermont, introduced the "Child, Worker and Consumer Safe Chemicals Act" to protect children and other Americans from toxic chemicals. This legislation comes as the European Union is debating its own chemicals policy, which the Bush Administration has actively opposed. The European Union has already banned more than 450 chemicals, while the U.S. has banned fewer than a dozen.

"At the state level, the Healthy Californians Biomonitoring Program is currently moving through the California legislature under the leadership of Senator Deborah Ortiz and Senate Majority Leader Don Perata.

"The results of this study are a wake-up call, and we have our marching orders - we must be more thorough in testing chemicals and eliminating exposure to those that cause harm. We must start a drumbeat to ensure that children are born into this world free from exposure to dangerous chemicals so they can reach their full potential.

"Thank you, Environmental Working Group and Commonweal for your leadership."

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