

March 4, 2026

Chair Shelley Moore Capito
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Sheldon Whitehouse
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Capito and Whitehouse:

The undersigned national public health and medical organizations strongly oppose any effort to weaken the nation's main chemical safety law, the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), as amended by the 2016 bipartisan Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act.

The Senate is currently engaged in discussions about potential changes to TSCA. We write to urge you to act in the best interest of the American people by preserving TSCA's mission to protect the public's health. TSCA is essential to safeguarding public health through comprehensive exposure reduction from harmful chemicals both already on the market and proposed to enter the market as well as testing chemicals for safety.

Widespread exposure to harmful industrial, commercial, and consumer chemicals poses significant risks to human health, with particularly serious implications for susceptible populations, including infants, children, pregnant women, and workers. Commonly used substances – such as volatile organic compounds, flame retardants, plasticizers, and PFAS – are pervasive in homes, schools, and communities and can negatively affect nearly every organ system. Robust independent, peer reviewed science demonstrates that chemical exposures are linked to a host of chronic diseases and poor health outcomes, including respiratory diseases like asthma, cardiovascular problems, infertility, diabetes, low birth weight, developmental disorders like autism and ADHD, and increased cancer risk across the U.S. population. Many of these conditions are on the rise in the United States.

Prior to 2016, in TSCA's first 40 years, EPA struggled to address harmful chemicals, including asbestos, a known human carcinogen that has caused hundreds of thousands of deaths, and allowed hundreds of new PFAS "forever" chemicals to be introduced into the environment.

TSCA's struggles led to a bipartisan effort in Congress to update the law in 2016 to ensure EPA could better protect people from harmful chemicals. At the time, a broad coalition of lawmakers and stakeholders, including many of the undersigned organizations, came together to modernize the law. One of the goals of the TSCA amendments was to provide stronger protections for

highly exposed and susceptible populations like pregnant women, children, workers, and people who live in areas where polluting facilities have been sited.

Today, TSCA is working far better than it ever did in the previous 40 years before it was amended in 2016. A key provision of the 2016 amendments includes the requirement that EPA must make an affirmative determination that a chemical does not pose an “unreasonable risk to human health or the environment” before marketplace entry. New chemicals and chemicals long present in the marketplace that have been known for decades to cause cancer and other adverse health effects are finally being evaluated, regulated, and in some instances banned – including the cancer-causing chemicals trichloroethylene, methylene chloride, and asbestos. While much remains to be accomplished, the public’s health is better protected from unsafe chemicals now than 10 years ago. This is exactly what Congress and our organizations hoped to achieve by strengthening TSCA in 2016.

Today’s proposal to undermine the law – so soon after it was strengthened with broad bipartisan and outside stakeholder support and careful negotiation – appears to be motivated solely by efforts to weaken regulatory efforts instead of improving science-based public health protections. Regulated entities claim that chemical regulation is too slow and expensive, and that rapidly approving more chemicals will drive innovation and lead to safer chemicals. However, the safety of chemicals can only be verified through robust regulatory assessment and opening TSCA for reform now will only open the door for weakening regulations – that water down incentives for industry to design truly safer chemicals – in order to approve more chemicals without a proper assessment of their harms. We believe that approaches to more quickly and effectively assess chemicals (e.g., grouping) can already be implemented under the current law and do not require additional action by Congress. We are deeply concerned that legislation to change TSCA by this Congress would likely undermine, not strengthen, the public health protections that were carefully negotiated in 2016.

Prevention is the primary tenet of public health. Health-based regulations have been proven to be enormously effective at improving health, reducing health care costs, and increasing life expectancy. EPA estimates that the [2024 TSCA rule](#) that reduced the risks from methylene chloride has a monetized benefit of \$25 million annualized over 20 years (3% discount rate) from avoided fatalities and cancer – putting aside unquantified benefits related to nervous system effects, kidney toxicity, and other health impacts. Weakening TSCA would likely repeat past mistakes by allowing new, potentially harmful chemicals to enter the market – much like the unchecked introduction of PFAS, which has burdened communities with [expensive](#) local clean up and [billions](#) in health costs, including medical care and reduced lifetime earnings.

EPA’s core mission is “to protect human health and the environment” – not to endanger public health by allowing new, untested chemicals into the market. We urge you to protect the public and environment by upholding strong public health protections in TSCA and rejecting any efforts to weaken this important public health law. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to further discuss this important public health issue.

Sincerely,

Able Differently

Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments

American Academy of Pediatrics

American College of Nurse-Midwives

American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists

American Lung Association

American Public Health Association

American Society for Reproductive Medicine

Association of Community Health Nursing Educators

Association of periOperative Registered Nurses

Association of Public Health Nurses

Breast Cancer Prevention Partners

California Safe Schools

Carolina Advocates for Climate, Health and Equity

Children's Environmental Health Network

Clinicians for Climate Action of New Jersey

Delaware Nurses Association

DNPs of Color

Endocrine Society

Health Care Without Harm

Learning Disabilities Association of Alabama

Learning Disabilities Association of America

Learning Disabilities Association of Arkansas

Learning Disabilities Association of California

Learning Disabilities Association of Florida

Learning Disabilities Association of Georgia

Learning Disabilities Association of Illinois
Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa
Learning Disabilities Association of Maine
Learning Disabilities Association of Maryland
Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan
Learning Disabilities Association of Minnesota
Learning Disabilities Association of New Hampshire
Learning Disabilities Association of New Jersey
Learning Disabilities Association of New York
Learning Disabilities Association of Ohio
Learning Disabilities Association of Oklahoma
Learning Disabilities Association of Pennsylvania
Learning Disabilities Association of South Carolina
Learning Disabilities Association of Texas
Learning Disabilities Association of Utah
Learning Disabilities Association of Virginia
Learning Disabilities Association of Wisconsin
Medical Students for a Sustainable Future
Michigan Nurses Association
MidAtlantic Alliance for Climate and Health
Minnesota Organization of Registered Nurses
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
National Association of Neonatal Nurses
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Coalition of Ethnic Minority Nurse Associations
National Environmental Health Association

National League for Nursing

National Medical Association

National Student Nurses' Association

Network of Black Male Nurse Leaders

New Jersey State Nurses Association

Nurse Wellbeing Institute

Philippine Nurses Association of America

Physicians for Social Responsibility

Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine

Society of Latinx Nurses