

April 10, 2013

Senator Frank Lautenberg
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
478 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators:

As a coalition of ten labor unions and four environmental groups, the BlueGreen Alliance (BGA) writes today to thank and commend you for your ongoing leadership in the effort to reform the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA). We support your newly introduced legislation, the Safe Chemicals Act of 2013, and recognize the many years of work which have gone into its creation.

Unchanged since its creation in 1976, TSCA now lags far behind progressive policies found in other regions, such as the European Union, and fails to address the significant costs associated with hazardous chemicals that are being imposed on downstream users. Consumers and workers too often have inadequate information regarding chemical products, limiting their ability to make informed decisions. The current regulatory regime hamstrings innovation in favor of using existing chemicals rather than seeking safer alternatives.

As our organization participated in the extensive stakeholder dialogue process which you spearheaded to work toward consensus around TSCA reform, we also appreciate the considerable effort at alliance building which underlies the form and content of this bill. Representing the interests of millions of workers and environmentalists, we particularly applaud the most important provisions of this legislation:

BLUEGREEN ALLIANCE PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



- Use of a health-based standard to assess chemical safety and explicitly require protection of the most vulnerable populations, including children, workers, minority communities and low-income groups;
- Prohibition against the introduction of new chemicals without a finding that the substance meets the applicable safety standard and is not a known or suspected reproductive, developmental, neurological, or immunological toxicant, carcinogen, mutagen, or endocrine disruptor;
- Directing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to prioritize those chemicals of particular hazard to the public for immediate risk management;
- Requiring chemical manufacturers to bear the burden of proving that chemical substances meet applicable safety standards;
- Ensuring that workers, communities, and the public have a right to know information regarding their chemical exposure;
- Requiring federal agency coordination to avoid overlapping responsibilities for protecting Americans' occupational and environmental health;
- Providing federal support for basic and applied research, and incentives for the production of safer alternatives to hazardous substances currently in use.

The chemical industry is a crucial segment of our national economy, directly or indirectly employing over four millions Americans. Building on this foundation, your effort to modernize our national chemical regulation policy will revitalize the sector by incentivizing the development and manufacture of new, safer chemicals.

By placing the burden of demonstrating chemical safety on industry, rather than the EPA, your legislation will jump-start innovation, igniting a new 'race to the top' as chemical manufacturers compete freely to develop consumer, worker, and environment friendly new substances. Far from endangering American jobs, this policy shift will spur the creation of the type of new, middle-class supporting jobs so vital to our nation's economic well-being.

In seeking to protect human health through effective government policy, your leadership has created a roadmap to a greener, healthier future for all Americans. We support your work on this critical endeavor and will continue doing our part to help ensure success moving forward.

Sincerely,



David A. Foster
Executive Director
BlueGreen Alliance

cc: Senator Barbara Boxer, Chair, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee

Senator David Vitter, Ranking Member, Senate Environment and Public Works
Committee

Senator Tom Udall, Chair, Senate Superfund, Toxics and Environmental Health
Subcommittee

Senator Mike Crapo, Ranking Member, Senate Superfund, Toxics and
Environmental Health Subcommittee