

PRESS RELEASE



Assemblymember

PEDRO NAVA

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Joint Green Chemistry Hearing Examines Elimination of Toxics from the Marketplace

(SACRAMENTO)—The Assembly's environmental and health committees met yesterday in a special joint hearing to discuss the information gap that prevents consumers from finding safe, healthy alternatives to toxic consumer products currently on the market.

Assemblymember Pedro Nava (D-Santa Barbara), chair of the Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee, convened the investigative hearing to determine whether the state agencies that require the elimination of toxic chemicals are meeting their legal obligations. Agencies that are responsible for green chemistry regulations include, California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal-EPA), Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA).

"California has a strong law that is designed to eliminate dangerous chemicals in consumer products. The question we are asking is whether or not state agencies are meeting their obligations to consumer protection by acting aggressively to develop the necessary rules," said Nava. "Our committee investigations have found that state agencies are proposing regulations that need to be strengthened to make sure that the public have a right to know the dangers of chemical in products they use everyday. We have heard loud and clear that the public supports strong programs that encourage product manufactures to use safer alternatives to existing toxic chemicals. Green chemistry offers that chance for California to lead the nation and build a strong economic base for safer chemicals. "

Assemblyman Wesley Chesbro (D-North Coast), who is the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, noted the need to expand the state program to save taxpayer the high cost of managing toxic waste, "It is important that the California's Green Chemistry program provides a pathway to shared responsibility between producers and governmental entities for the management of toxic materials. I have a particular interest in the successes and challenges of this program because I want to create a similar Producer Responsibility program for materials that currently end up in California's waste stream. "

Said California student Mari Vial-Golden, who testified at today's hearing, "Because of the lack of government policy around toxic chemicals in all aspects of our lives, we founded Teens Turning Green to take action to eliminate these exposures. TTG will launch a powerful initiative this fall called Project Green Clean working toward safer products, practices, and guidelines for households and schools. Efforts like this, as well as community action on important government programs like the Green Chemistry Initiative, are necessary to protect consumers."

The hearing's major focus was on the implementation of Assembly Bill 1879 (2008, Feuer) and Senate Bill 509 (2007, Simitian), both of which created the "Green Chemistry Initiative" which

established a mechanism for public information and regulatory review of toxic chemical uses.
Witnesses discussed whether state agencies are doing enough to protect California consumers.

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