



## **Banning Flame Retardants in Children's Products**

Testimony – HB 1174

House Environment Committee

January 19, 2015

Representative Fitzgibbon and members of the Committee, my name is Tom Parker and I am here this afternoon on behalf of the Washington State Catholic Conference, which represents the Catholic Bishops of Washington State on issues of public policy.

Catholics believe we have a moral obligation to protect the planet on which we live. As Pope Francis has said, *"I would like to ask all those who have positions of responsibility in economic, political and social life, and all men and women of goodwill: let us be protectors' of creation, protectors of God's plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment. We are called... to show respect for, and solidarity with, all the members of our human family. ... [and] the needs of our brothers and sisters living in extreme poverty, and especially for the many children in our world."*

Over the past few years, the Catholic Conference has supported legislation that bans toxic chemicals from products used by children. Harmful chemicals including lead, Bisphenol A, mercury, etc. have been found in items children use to play, wear, sleep and eat. Many chemicals are linked to cancer, fertility and learning problems.

Available science has sufficiently proven that TRIS and other flame retardant materials provide a risk to children in children's products and upholstered furniture. Elimination of these chemicals in consumer products in favor of better alternatives provides a safer environment for human beings.

WSCC supports full disclosure of the flame retardants contained in children's products and requests that safe alternatives be substituted for the chemicals of concern.

Thank you.