

California Medical Association Modern Chemicals Policy

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Resolution 712-07

Adopted October 29, 2007

WHEREAS, the state, national, and global scale of industrial chemical production is immense and is expected to grow four-fold by 2050, and the chemical industry is an important industry with wide contributions to health and human development; and

WHEREAS, ever-expanding research confirms that many chemicals that are useful to society are also known to be hazardous to human biology and health, particularly in utero and in developing children; and

WHEREAS, for new and existing medications, the Food and Drug Administration has long required pre-approval evaluation of safety as well as efficacy, and many industrial chemicals with known impacts on human biology are present in human bodies at levels similar to active doses of medications; and

WHEREAS, numerous other nations including Canada and the European Union are adopting more proactive health-oriented chemicals policies, based upon scientific knowledge, assessment, and accepted public health principles; and

WHEREAS, there are long-standing deficiencies in the federal regulation of industrial chemicals, most notably in the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), as confirmed by the National Academy of Sciences and others, and the University of California documented in a 2006 report to the California Legislature that TSCA's deficiencies are important and can be remedied; and

WHEREAS, these problems include the projected appearance of 600 new hazardous waste sites each month in the U.S. over the next 25 years; the appearance of hundreds of industrial chemicals in human tissues and fluids, including those of infants; and the development of chronic diseases caused by chemical exposures on the job among 23,000 California workers each year; and

WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association's leadership has recently endorsed a policy titled "Calling on the U.S. Congress to restructure the Toxic Substances Control Act and implement a modern, comprehensive chemicals policy", to be considered for adoption at the annual APHA meeting in November; Therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the CMA call upon the State of California and United States to implement a state and national modern, comprehensive chemicals policy in line with

current scientific knowledge on human health, and which requires a full evaluation of the health impacts of both newly developed and existing industrial chemicals now in use;
And be it further

RESOLVED: That this matter be referred for national action.

REFERENCES: <http://www.healthandenvironment.org/science/papers>