

June 16, 2006

Dear Congressman:

On Thursday, May 18, the House Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous Materials reported legislation (H.R. 4591) to implement the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), the POPs Protocol to the UN Economic Commission for Europe's Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP), and the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent (PIC). The undersigned organizations, representing a broad cross-section of the U.S. economy, are writing to ask for your vote in support of H.R. 4591 when it is considered by the full House Energy and Commerce Committee, with no weakening amendments.

The treaties that are the subject of H.R. 4591 are already in force – yet the U.S. is not a party. As a result, the United States has no vote in the important decisions being made under the treaties. More importantly, these treaties are modeled on U.S. law and are the direct result of U.S. leadership in the negotiations, but without implementing legislation the United States cannot join the more than 125 other governments that have already ratified the agreements. In short, H.R. 4591 is essential if the United States is to remain an important player in the evolution of global chemical management.

H.R. 4591 will amend the Toxic Substances Control Act and permit the United States to fully implement its obligations under the treaties. The bill also establishes procedures to ban or otherwise regulate chemical substances or mixtures added to the treaties in the future. Under the legislation the U.S. would work within an international framework and factor in global concerns, but it reserves to the U.S. government the power to make regulatory decisions that affect the United States – just as the treaties do. The legislation preserves U.S. sovereignty as well as the structure and intent of existing federal environmental law. That includes TSCA's original preemption provision, in effect now for 30 years, which reflects long-standing Congressional intent for federal uniformity in controlling chemical substances while providing a mechanism for states and localities to regulate those substances more stringently when necessary. H.R. 4591 is the necessary next step to assuring that the United States can fully and effectively participate in these important international agreements. We hope we can count on your strong support for H.R. 4591.

If we can provide any additional information on our position, please contact Michael Walls of the American Chemistry Council, at 703 741 5167. Further information on the treaties implemented under H.R. 4591 is attached for your information.

Sincerely,

Agricultural Retailers Association
American Chemistry Council
Chlorine Chemistry Council
Consumer Specialty Products Association
CropLife America
CTIA--The Wireless Association
Council of Great Lakes Industries
Edison Electric Institute

Electronic Industries Association
North American Metals Council
Semiconductor Industry Association
The Fertilizer Institute
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
United States Council for International Business
Utility Solid Waste Activities Group
Vinyl Institute

Enclosure