

FRANK R. LAUTENBERG CHEMICAL SAFETY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 3, 2016

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I support the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act because too many Americans are getting sick from dangerous, unregulated chemicals found in the products we use every day. This bill would protect public health by making long-overdue chemical safety reforms.

Today, industries can release hundreds of chemicals each year into our homes and workplaces without any federal requirement to consider their safety. Research has linked chemicals used in everyday products, such as household cleaners, clothing, and furniture, to serious illnesses like cancer, infertility, diabetes and Parkinson's. But currently, the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)—our broken chemical safety law—gives the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) little power to do anything about these dangers. Under TSCA, only a small fraction of the thousands of chemicals used in our products have ever been reviewed for safety.

The law is so weak that the EPA couldn't even regulate asbestos. In 1989, after 10 years of research and more than 100,000 pages of administrative record supporting action, the EPA issued a rule under TSCA to ban most uses of asbestos. But two years later, the EPA's regulation was overturned by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals; while acknowledging that "asbestos is a potential carcinogen at all levels of exposure," the Court ruled that the agency's administrative record failed to demonstrate that the regulation was the "least burdensome alternative," as required under the law. Since the court's ruling, the burden to regulate most toxic substances under TSCA has been insurmountable.

The reforms in the Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act would help keep our communities safer by requiring reviews for chemicals in use today, mandating greater scrutiny of new chemicals, and removing barriers that have prevented the EPA from regulating highly toxic substances in the past, such as asbestos.

This reform is an urgently needed next step, but there are still problems with this bill and more work should be done to protect our communities. Provisions in this bill sought by the chemical industry create unprecedented state preemption standards and put limitations on the EPA's ability to monitor chemicals in imported products. Federal policy should be seen as a floor, not a ceiling, when it comes to establishing standards for public health and safety. We must support states, like my home state of Minnesota, that have led the way in creating chemical safety standards that protect their residents. Last year in Minnesota, we took an important step toward protecting children and firefighters' health when the legislature passed a law to prohibit four toxic flame retardants (Deca, HBCD, TCEP and TDCPP) from children's products and upholstered furniture.

Policies that preempt state action or restrict EPA's ability to monitor imported products

threaten public health and safety. We need to fight back against these bad policies as we continue our efforts to reform TSCA. For my part, I will continue to be an advocate for reform that protects public health, not the chemical industry.

IN RECOGNITION OF LOUDOUN COUNTY'S SCHOOLS TO WATCH IN 2016

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 3, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge several schools in Loudoun County that have been named Schools to Watch in 2016 by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform. Eagle Ridge, Farmwell Station, J. Lupton Simpson, River Bend, and Sterling Middle Schools have been recognized as five of only 145 schools around the country to receive this honor.

This honor requires schools to excel in the following criteria: academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, and social equality. Each of these schools has challenged their students to achieve academic excellence over the course of the school year. They have also shown a unique ability to identify and work with early adolescent developmental challenges, all while providing every student with the highest quality of teachers, resources, and support, regardless of socioeconomic status.

Coming from a family of educators, I understand how important a strong education is to the future of our nation. It is schools like these that will continue to help shape the United States' role in the evolving global economy, while at the same time producing many of our nation's future leaders. Eagle Ridge, Farmwell Station, J. Lupton Simpson, River Bend, and Sterling Middle Schools have clearly shown a dedication to developing and educating our children. The outstanding qualities they have all exemplified are not to be understated; what they have achieved is something of which to be truly proud.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating these 2016 Schools to Watch for their incredible achievements. I wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. AUSTIN SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 3, 2016

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 231 on ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 743, Providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5055) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes, I am not recorded because I was detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 232 on agreeing to the Resolution H. Res. 743, Providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5055) making appropriations for energy and water develop-

ment and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and for other purposes, I am not recorded because I was detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 233 on ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 742, Providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 2576) to modernize the Toxic Substances Control Act, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 897) Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act, and for other purposes, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 234 on agreeing to the Resolution H. Res. 742, Providing for consideration of the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 2576) to modernize the Toxic Substances Control Act, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 897) Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act, and for other purposes, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 235 on motion to suspend the rules and pass, as amended H.R. 5077, Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 236 on motion to recommit with instructions to H.R. 897, Zika Vector Control Act, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted NAY.

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 237 on passage of H.R. 897, Zika Vector Control Act, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 238 on concurring in the Senate Amendment with an Amendment to H.R. 2576, Frank R. Lautenberg Chemical Safety for the 21st Century Act, I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE COALITION TO SALUTE AMERICA'S HEROES

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 3, 2016

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a great American organization, the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes, that recently celebrated 12 years of service this past May.

The Coalition, headquartered in my district, is a 501(c)(3), nonprofit, non-partisan organization established in 2004 to provide severely wounded veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan with immediate, invaluable lifelines. The Coalition is distinguished from other veteran-focused groups by its direct financial assistance to America's wounded warriors.

Its Emergency Financial Aid program has stopped foreclosure proceedings on veterans' homes, kept their vehicles from being repossessed, put food on their tables, provided diapers for their babies, and even helped steer