

Senate Committee on Judiciary
April 23, 2013

Good afternoon Madame Chair and Members:

I am here to present Senate Bill 193, a measure providing authority to the Hazard Evaluation System and Information Service, known as HESIS, to take the necessary steps to seek information from chemical manufacturers, formulators, suppliers, distributors, importers, and their agents that protects employees from being exposed to potentially toxic materials.

In 1978, HESIS was established as a data repository to provide reliable information to employers and employees about the potential hazards faced by employees due to exposure to toxic materials and harmful physical agents, and to collect and evaluate related toxicological and epidemiological data. HESIS also makes recommendations to the Chief of the Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration when standards should be

developed to address potential workplace exposure risks posed by specific chemicals.

California has confronted a number of difficulties when responding to the release of chemical hazards in recent years. Too often, the public is provided protections only after damaging effects to workers' health have become pervasive. Finding information concerning new, unregulated chemicals is often very difficult to track when they are used in many different settings. When it has been able to obtain the necessary information, HESIS has provided early warnings to various industries concerning prospective hazards, such as alerts on chemicals posing reproductive hazards and cancer.

Specifically, SB 193 would require chemical manufacturers, formulators, suppliers, distributors, importers, and their agents, to provide the names and addresses of their customers who have purchased chemicals or products containing those chemicals, and

their proportions, when requested to do so by HESIS and under conditions of confidentiality.

Two additional points I want to make are that this bill does not require a business or company to implement any new system for maintaining the information but instead, that the format be consistent with the current data system they already use; and 2) the measure be effective on January 1, 2015 in order that there is no confusion about having information for a one-year period once the legislation is enacted.

You will hear from my witness, Dr. Julia Quint, former Chief of HESIS, how this measure could have been useful a few years ago when the butter flavor chemical, Diacetyl, was found to cause severe damage to workers' health.

Members, SB 193 is simply a tool that will help the Department of Public Health and HESIS to keep workers safe by using

information to improve safety programs. Knowing who to share this valuable safety information with allows for increased training about the hazards and health effects needed to minimize health risks and to monitor worker exposure.

FOR THESE REASONS, I RESPECTFULLY REQUEST YOUR
AYE VOTE!

I want to present my witnesses in support of the bill, starting with
Dr. Julia Quint, Retired Chief of HESIS.