



May 7, 2013

Senator Bill Monning
California State Capitol Room 4066
Sacramento, CA 90301

e-mailed to Kathy.Smith@sen.ca.gov

RE: SB 193 - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Monning:

On behalf of all three California Chapters Physicians for Social Responsibility, we write to express our strong support for SB 193. PSR California chapters represent physicians and other health professionals dedicated to promoting healthy communities and advocating for social and environmental justice. We have a long history of educating the medical community about the gravest environmental threats to human health, and working to eliminate health inequalities caused by environmental exposures.

As health professionals, we see the rise in diseases associated with toxic chemical exposure, and it is our responsibility to speak out and prevent toxic exposures whenever possible. We know that of the 80,000 chemicals currently on the U.S. market, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that fewer than 10% of high production chemicals (over one million pounds per year) have undergone even a limited set of tests to assess their health effects on humans prior to being put on the market. Current law requires the California Department of Public Health's program, HESIS (Hazard Evaluation System & Information Service), to provide information of practical use to employers, employees, and others on toxic workplace hazards. But it does not give HESIS the ability to find out where any toxics are being used in California, thus undermining HESIS ability to provide early warnings. SB 193 would require chemical manufacturers and others in the chain of distribution to provide, upon written request, the names and addresses of customers who have purchased specified toxics or commercial products containing those toxics, and SB 193 also assures that the customer lists will remain confidential.

We support the critical purpose of HESIS to provide scientific, medical and public health expertise to help prevent workplace illness and disease. SB 193 assures that HESIS can reach and advise employers on measures needed to protect their workers, including information on safer alternatives, when HESIS has information regarding negative health impacts of certain toxic chemicals. HESIS will be able to target those at risk rather than merely posting its valuable guidance to limit exposure and prevent disease on the web with no guarantee it will reach those in need. As workers are often exposed to toxics whose health effects are not all known, HESIS's ability to act quickly and efficiently is vital to protect workers' health and safety.

We thank you for authoring this important bill.

Sincerely,

Martha Dina Argüello
Los Angeles PSR

Robert Gould, MD
SF-Bay Area PSR

Harry Wang, MD
Sacramento PSR