

Styrofoam and Democrats in Congress

I received an E-mail showing that there are now 61 concerned Democrats that signed the letter which I will also attach.

This letter is in regards to the letter to Rep. Boehner by Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) and other concerned Democrats; it's titled "Cancer Causing Cups in the Cafeteria?"

I am very upset to learn that the Congress is protecting the health of themselves but not the health of their constituents. After all it was this same Congress that pushed the Health Care Reform otherwise known as Obama-care and S 510 the Food Safety Law with no mention of the affects of these containers!

I happen to know about this first hand because as a 17 year veteran trucker I was exposed to the way our government turns a blind eye to the Transportation industry. To explain it further please go to my website: <http://www.comfortncolor.com/HTML/PoisoningPage.html> the best page that shows other Laws that have been set aside or deemed unusable is <http://www.comfortncolor.com/HTML/Law.html> .

The last two years of my trucking career I was unloading Styrofoam food containers and other food products out of truck/trailers that was used to carry Asbestos and other toxic materials. It took my Doctors 8 years to figure out that I was poisoned by the Styrofoam food containers! So I know all too well the affects of these containers and have been trying to educate people with my website and my internet radio show <http://www.talkshoe.com/tc/36908> . I feel it is important to let people know that the transportation of our Food Supply is no safer now with S 510 as Law then it was before S 510; all it does is give the American people a False Sense of Security.

My representative, Senator Gillibrand states that transporting of toxic materials and food in the same truck/trailers happens but has refused to stop the practice even though she Co-sponsored S 510 the Food Safety law. You can hear her say that on the news WTEN in Albany New York that aired on 11/05/09 on the front page of my website.

I understand that I am not your constituent but, if I could be of any help to you in writing a bill to stop the poisoning of the American people please contact me.

Since I was unable to E-Mail this to Rep. Earl Blumenauer I called his office (Thursday, March 10, 2011(503) 231-2300) and was told by his staff that my help would not be necessary because they will not be writing a bill to protect the American people about this issue.

Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-Maine) staff was very interested and took all my information even though I am not a constituent. Called Thursday, March 10, 20112 Portland Fish Pier, Suite 304 Portland, ME 04101, Phone: (207) 774-5019, Toll free: 1-888-862-6500, Fax: (207) 871-0720

The other Rep. Staff would not say if they were for a bill to ban Styrofoam. Some took my information.

Hoping you can use this as a lead for a story.

Charles Lake

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E-Mail Address - considerthis@verizon.net

FW: styrofoam?

Friday, March 11, 2011 3:03 PM

From:

"Auspitz, Kate" Kate.Auspitz@mail.house.gov

Of Rep. Mike Capuano (Mass. D) Office

To: "'considerthis@verizon.net'" <considerthis@verizon.net>

From: Auspitz, Kate

Sent: Friday, March 11, 2011 9:56 AM

To: 'considerthis@verizon.com'

Subject: FW: styrofoam?

Current signers: Blumenauer, Moran, Honda, Pingree, Susan Davis, Lofgren, Doggett, George Miller, Capuano, Polis, Wu, Speier, McCollum, Inslee, Langevin, Gonzalez, Lee, Markey, Napolitano, Gutierrez, Baldwin, Stark, Rothman, Farr, Hinchey, Clarke, Van Hollen, Robert Brady, Hanabusa, McGovern, Schakowsky, Sires, Filner, Tsongas, Woolsey, Chu, Olver, Edwards, Moore, Frederica Wilson, John Lewis, Maloney, Norton, Waxman, Jesse Jackson, Kildee, Deutch, Wasserman Shultz, Cohen, Towns, Schiff, Mike Thompson, Tim Ryan, Linda Sánchez, Jackson Lee, Conyers, Hank Johnson, DeLauro, Pallone, Garamendi, McDermott, Eshoo, Holt, Neal

Speaker John Boehner Majority Leader Eric Cantor

1011 Longworth House Office Building 303 Cannon House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515 Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Dan Lungren

House Administration Committee

2313 Rayburn House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

March 11, 2011

Dear Speaker Boehner, Majority Leader Cantor, and Chairman Lungren:

We are writing to express our deep concern with the current choice to use polystyrene products, commonly known as “styrofoam,”^[1] in the House of Representatives cafeterias. While we appreciate that the CAO is working to reduce costs, there are significant health and environmental risks associated with styrofoam, as well as additional costs associated with increased waste removal. These external costs should be considered in making the decision for cafeteria products; the desire to save a few pennies should never come at the expense of jeopardizing staff, members and visitors’ health. Over 20 years ago, McDonalds and other fast food restaurants replaced polystyrene foam with recyclable and paperboard containers. More than 100 cities have also chosen to ban polystyrene foam for health and environmental reasons. Adopting the same standard is the least we can do.

We have numerous concerns about the safety of polystyrene foam products. Polystyrene foam products can leach their component chemicals into the foods and liquids they contain. Leaching of styrene and benzene is documented with nearly 40 years of scientific evidence, as are the resulting negative health impacts.^[2] During the manufacturing process, acute short-term exposure to styrene can result in irritation to the eyes, nose, throat, and mucous membranes as well as gastrointestinal effects.

Over time, exposure to the [styrene](#) that leaches into food and liquids can cause extensive health effects, including fatigue, headaches, hearing loss, central nervous system dysfunction, difficulty sleeping, as well as low platelet and hemoglobin values and chromosomal abnormalities.^{[3][4]} The International Agency for Research on Cancer classified styrene as a potential human carcinogen. Eliminating polystyrene-related health impacts will result in fewer lost work days and lower health insurance costs for the House and its staff. This benefit alone should outweigh any cost savings from using polystyrene containers.

Polystyrene foam products continue to threaten public health and the environment after they are used and discarded. Polystyrene is not easily or cheaply recycled, and there are significant health and environmental impacts from the 25 million polystyrene foam cups that are thrown away per year. When disposed of in landfills, products made of polystyrene take over half a millennium to biodegrade. While in landfills, polystyrene chemicals can leach into groundwater, jeopardizing water quality. The safe incineration of polystyrene foam requires extremely high heat in specialized plants. Incineration at normal heat levels releases over 90 different hazardous chemicals, polluting the air quality of those communities surrounding the waste plants and burdening them with increased health risks and costs.

Although we strongly support efforts to reduce costs in the federal government, it is our understanding that the cafeteria operations generate profits for the House – an estimated \$879,000 for 2010. Any costs associated with composting or any of the other environmentally sound options were always meant to be offset by these profits. Those of us who are concerned about the health and safety of Members, staff and visitors feel that this is certainly a worthwhile use for these proceeds.

The irresponsibility of the decision to use polystyrene foam without considering other options is all the more egregious because the cafeteria is not merely used by House members and our staffers. The health of constituents

and visitors to the Hill who eat in the cafeteria will be impacted by this short-sighted decision. We urge you to bear in mind our responsibility to protect the health and welfare of the American public, now and in future generations, and to reconsider the decision to use Polystyrene foam in our cafeteria.

Sincerely,