



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

January 18, 2012

The Honorable Margaret A. Hamburg, M.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20993-0002

Dear Commissioner Hamburg:

I write regarding the forthcoming decision by the Food Drug and Administration (FDA) on the use of bisphenol-A, or BPA, in food and beverage packaging. As you review the science on BPA, I urge you to take a strong position against this chemical. Of particular concern are the effects of this chemical on vulnerable populations, such as babies, children, and pregnant women.

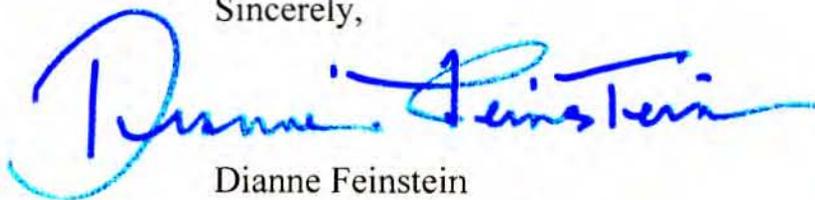
BPA is a synthetic endocrine disruptor, which means it interferes with how hormones work in the body. Over 200 scientific studies link exposure to BPA, even at low doses, to harmful health effects. Negative health problems include brain and behavioral disorders, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and early puberty. Babies and children are particularly at risk because of their developing bodies and their smaller size. We know that BPA can cross the placenta, meaning babies *in utero* can be exposed from the mother. BPA has been found in blood samples from developing fetuses, as well as in umbilical cord blood of newborn infants, and in breast milk.

BPA is used in everything from infant formula to canned foods to receipt paper. This chemical is so widespread it has been found in 93 percent of Americans. For far too long, BPA has been used without a determination of safety and I feel strongly that it should be removed from products where it can leach into food and beverages. I am pleased that your agency, charged with protecting American consumers, is finally taking action on BPA and I urge you to take action that protects public health and considers the potential harm of aggregate exposure to vulnerable populations.

At the very least, this chemical should be banned from children's feeding products – baby bottles, sippy cups, baby food, and infant formula. Alternatives are available. States, manufacturers, and retailers are all recognizing the importance of banning BPA in children's products. California – the largest state in the union – recently became the 11th state to enact a ban on BPA in certain children's products. Countries like Canada, France, China, and Denmark are taking action. Major manufacturers and retailers are taking action and offering BPA-free alternatives.

I look forward to your Agency taking a stance to protect public health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dianne Feinstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

DF:nc