

House Republican Press Release

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**KEY COMMITTEE APPROVES REP. ROWE BILL TO PROTECT SCHOOLCHILDREN**



*INITIATIVE WOULD BAN HARMFUL  
CHEMICALS IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS*

HARTFORD- The General Assembly's Education Committee has approved an initiative to protect local schoolchildren introduced by State Representative T.R. Rowe, R-Trumbull. The measures, contained in House Bill 7096, An Act Concerning Pesticide Applications At Schools And The Use Of Environmentally Sensitive Cleaning And Maintenance Products In Schools, now moves to the Appropriations Committee for consideration. The committee voted 28-1 to approve the legislation on March 19.

Health authorities maintain exposure to certain toxic cleaning chemicals used in school buildings can lead to serious health ailments. The concept introduced by Reps. Rowe and Themis Klarides, R-Derby, that is included in HB 7096 would prohibit the use of any cleaning product containing a toxic substance inside an elementary school building. Measures are currently in place in New York and New Jersey via an executive order from their respective governors. HB 7096 would place comparable restrictions into our state statutes and extend these protections to elementary and secondary schoolchildren.

"I'm pleased the Education Committee overwhelmingly supported this legislation," said Rep. Rowe. "With the amount of time children spend in school buildings, it makes sense to remove what have been proven to be toxic chemicals used for cleaning. Non-toxic or 'green' products work just as well as the chemicals that would be banned and I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to move this legislation forward."

During a February 13 public hearing, a representative from the Association of School Nurses of Connecticut testified in support of HB 7096, noting that changing to safer products and practices would reduce adverse health effects and exacerbations of diseases like asthma. A representative from the Sierra Club of Connecticut also testified in support of the legislation.

According to data from the Federal Environmental Protection Agency, traditional cleaning products can contain harmful chemicals that can cause cancer, reproductive disorders, major organ damage, and permanent eye damage. Other common health problems associated with cleaning chemicals include headaches, dizziness, and fatigue.

