

# **CITIZEN-INITIATED PETITION FOR RULEMAKING**

## **TO REQUIRE SAFER ALTERNATIVES TO BISPHENOL A (BPA) IN FOOD AND BEVERAGE PACKAGING FOR YOUNG CHILDREN**

### **Executive Summary**

Bisphenol A (BPA) is a proven toxic chemical to which Maine children are exposed through packaged food. In light of the overwhelming evidence of harm, exposure, and safer alternatives to bisphenol-A (BPA) in food packaging, 869 Maine voters have petitioned the Maine Board of Environmental Protection (BEP) to require manufacturers to use safer alternatives to BPA in infant formula, baby food and toddler food packaging through a citizen-initiated rulemaking.

#### **BPA IS HARMFUL TO CHILDREN**

Evidence of BPA's harm to children's health is overwhelming, and has only grown since 2010, when the BEP found that BPA is a known endocrine disruptor and developmental toxicant, and named it as the first priority chemical under Maine's Kid-Safe Products Act. At that time, the Maine Center for Disease Control identified over 100 studies documenting BPA's adverse effects on growth, brain development, behavior, early onset of puberty, changes in sex hormones, male fertility and immune function. The updated science review submitted with this petition identifies over 100 additional peer-reviewed scientific studies published since that time.

#### **CHILDREN ARE EXPOSED TO BPA IN FOOD**

The BEP also already found that BPA is intentionally added to food and beverage packaging, and that infants and toddlers in Maine are exposed to this harmful chemical by eating certain packaged foods. Multiple scientific studies, tests and surveys submitted by the petitioners confirm this decision and show that food in cans and jars lined with BPA is likely the largest source of children's exposure to BPA. In fact, exposure could be reduced by two-thirds if food packaging were BPA-free.

#### **SAFER ALTERNATIVES ARE AVAILABLE, EFFECTIVE, AND AFFORDABLE**

Due to increasing public concern, consumer demand and prohibitions in other states and countries, the food and beverage industry has begun shifting to alternative packaging and packaging components that do not contain BPA. Evidence submitted by the petitioners, including reports filed by manufacturers themselves, proves that safer alternatives to packaging made with BPA are already widely available, effective, and affordable.

#### **CONCLUSION**

In 2010, Maine took an important first step toward protecting children from BPA, by requiring that baby bottles, sippy cups, and other reusable food and beverage containers be BPA-free. In light of overwhelming evidence of harm from BPA, children's exposure to BPA from food and beverages, and the widespread availability of safer alternatives, the petitioners request that the Board act to protect the children of Maine by requiring the use of safer alternatives to BPA in packaging for infant formula, baby food, and toddler food and beverages. Without immediate action by the Board to require safer food packaging for infants, babies and toddlers, the children of Maine will continue to be exposed to BPA at an age when its health effects are most damaging.