

**National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
Legislative Report
February 2010**

Endocrine Disruptors (H.R. 4160, H.R. 4190, S. 2828)

In December 2009, Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (D-NY) introduced the Environmental Hormone Disruption Research Act (H.R. 4160). The bill calls for NIEHS to establish a program to: (1) research the effects on women and children that may result from disruption of the hormone systems; (2) carryout research on technologies to mitigate the occurrence of hormone disruptors (EDCs) in the environment; and (3) coordinate U.S. research with that conducted in other countries. In addition, the bill asks NIEHS to collect and disseminate information on health effects of EDCs, on the extent of human exposure to EDCs, and on exposure of wildlife to EDCs and possible health effects associated with such exposures. The bill establishes both an interagency committee and an advisory panel. The committee is charged with planning a research program based on recommendations from the panel.

Congressman Jim Moran (D-VA) and Senator John Kerry (D-MA) have introduced companion bills (H.R. 4190 and S. 2828) that ask NIEHS to establish a research program to address possible health effects of EDCs and to develop tests to screen chemicals with the potential to disrupt the endocrine system. The bills call for NIEHS to sponsor workshops and conferences to identify chemicals of concern and provide recommendations on a research plan. In addition, the bills establish an advisory panel to provide advice on the conduct and support of research, evaluate biomonitoring and biobanking programs, and develop a list of chemicals of concern for endocrine disruption effects. The panel would update the list annually and provide its level of concern for each chemical. The bills require the regulatory agencies to report to the NIEHS director on their authorities related to the chemicals on this list and their course of action to be taken by the agency in response to the panel's findings.

Bisphenol A (H.R. 4341, H.R. 4456, and H.R.2749)

In December 2009, Congressman Tim Ryan (D-OH) introduced a bill (H.R. 4341) requiring a label on containers noting that they are composed in whole or part of BPA. Congressman Anthony Weiner (D-NY) has introduced a companion (H.R. 4456) to Senator Schumer's BPA-Free Kids Act. The bill bans the manufacture and sale of food and beverage containers made with BPA for children three and under. Containers have to be labeled BPA-free. It requires NIEHS to begin a five-year initiative to increase understanding of the health effects of exposure to BPA in all age groups and in pregnant women and authorizes \$5,000,000 for these activities.

Congressman John Dingell (D-MI) included a provision in the Food Safety Enhancement Act (H.R. 2749) requiring the HHS Secretary to notify Congress whether available scientific data support a determination that there is reasonable certainty of no harm from approved uses of plastics and epoxy resins made with BPA in food and beverage containers. The bill has passed House and has been referred to Senate HELP.

Women's Health (H.R. 4161)

Congresswoman Louise Slaughter has introduced once again the Women's Environmental Health and Disease Prevention Act which requires NIEHS to fund centers to conduct multidisciplinary research on environmental factors that may be related to women's health. Each center would provide training for scientists and health professionals and collaborate with community organizations in the region served by the center.

Small Business Act and Small Business Investment Act Extension

On January 29, the President signed into law H.R. 4508, a bill to provide for an additional temporary extension of programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958, as P.L. 111-136. The bill, introduced on January 26, passed the House on January 27 and passed the Senate on January 28. The law extends the SBIR/STTR program through April 30, 2010 under its current provisions. The most recent extension expired on January 31, 2010.

In addition, Senator Benjamin Cardin (D-MD), a member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, introduced S. 2967, the "Boosting Entrepreneurship and New Jobs Act", a bill to spur job creation by providing essential tax credits and loans to small business. It contains a provision that would reverse the "waiver" provision in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) which waived the set-aside requirement for SBIR for purposes of this ARRA funding bill. The provision in S. 2967 would require that NIH now set aside \$150M for SBIR programs from the NIH ARRA funds. No action has been taken.