

June 11, 2007

### **FCI Statement on Massachusetts' Proposed Ten Chemical Ban Legislation**

The Formaldehyde Council is deeply troubled by action in the Massachusetts legislature on proposed legislation that seeks to substitute ten chemicals, including formaldehyde, potentially leading to bans of these chemicals in various applications and products. In a hearing conducted on June 11<sup>th</sup> by the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture, legislators heard testimony on the bill, also known as the Safer Alternatives to Toxic Chemicals bill. According to FCI and its members, the proposed legislation fails to provide scientific basis for its inclusion of formaldehyde as a top ten "priority toxic substance."

The FCI is concerned that the State of Massachusetts is embarking down a path that ignores the best available science and may encourage the use of substitutes with limited human health data and life-cycle analysis data. There is no credible evidence that formaldehyde, at common levels of exposure, constitutes a significant health risk. Nevertheless, the proposed legislation would necessitate the substitution of formaldehyde with alternatives whose impact on human health and the environment is unknown.

The preponderance of existing human health research data on formaldehyde demonstrates that the risk of cancer as well as other chronic diseases at relevant formaldehyde exposure levels is virtually nil. The FCI feels strongly that additional research being conducted by government and industry will serve to further clarify the level of understanding pertaining to the safety of formaldehyde for consumers and industry workers.

Formaldehyde is a naturally occurring chemical that is found in abundance in the atmosphere and is produced by the human body, among other sources. The chemistry of formaldehyde makes it an extremely versatile ingredient in hundreds of items that improve everyday life. While little or no formaldehyde is present in most final products, the chemical is an essential component in making common consumer goods including medicines, vaccines, furniture, cabinets, insulation and other building products, as well as shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste and much more. Formaldehyde's wide-ranging use makes it essential to the operations of nearly 50,000 U.S. facilities in 17 major industries, and it serves as a basic raw material in another 70 industries.

###