

# American Academy of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™  
NYS AAP, District II, A coalition of Chapters 1, 2 & 3

April 24, 2021

## **Memo of Support S. 4630-A (Kaminsky) / A. 5418 (Englebright)**

**NYS AAP, representing more than 5,000 pediatricians across New York State, strongly supports the Family and Fire Fighter Protection Act.**

This bill amends the environmental conservation law, in relation to the regulation of chemicals in upholstered furniture, mattresses and electronic enclosures. It addresses the harmful effects of organohalogen on infants', toddlers' and children's physical and intellectual development.

Taking effect December 31, 2023, the legislation prohibits the sale of mattresses or upholstered furniture that contain intentionally added flame retardant chemicals. As of January 1, 2024, the sale of an electronic display that contains intentionally added organohalogen flame retardants will be prohibited.

Flame retardants are regularly added to household products such as upholstered furniture, children's toys, and mattresses. A growing body of scientific literature links flame retardants to endocrine disruption, reproductive problems, and reduced IQ. Because these chemicals interact with their environment in unpredictable ways, and because children's bodies are still developing, the long-term health risks and bio-accumulative properties of flame retardants are of particular concern to young children.

Studies show that certain Organohalogen Flame Retardants (OFR) are associated with harm to children's brain capacities that are critical for thinking and success in school. These effects include lower IQ and problems with verbal comprehension, perceptual reasoning, motor coordination, hyperactivity, impulsivity, and attention. These associations are seen with flame retardant exposures before birth, when the mother is pregnant, and in infants and young children.

Because these chemicals migrate out from everyday household products, including mattresses, furniture, televisions, and other electronics, into the air and dust, almost all United State residents have measurable quantities of toxic flame retardants in their blood. We strongly urge the New York legislature to protect our children and communities by passing the Family and Fire Fighter Protection Act.

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