

US lawmakers move to ban baby bottle chemical

13 March 2009

US lawmakers on Friday introduced legislation to ban the toxic chemical Bisphenol-A, suspected of harming human development, from all food and beverage containers.

The move came a week after state officials announced that the six major US baby bottle makers had agreed to stop using the substance popularly known as BPA, which has been blamed for a range of health problems in infants.

"The scientific evidence is mounting that BPA poses serious health risks, especially to children, and manufacturers and retailers have already started to pull items from their store shelves," said Democratic Congressman Edward Markey, one of the bill's lead authors.

"It is time for Congress to act quickly to ban this toxin from all [food](#) and [beverage containers](#) so that parents can feed their children without worrying that the food contains poisonous chemicals."

Under the measure, reusable beverage containers, such as baby bottles and thermoses, that contain BPA could not be sold, while other containers like food cans or baby formula that contain BPA could not be produced.

The bill would empower the US [Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA) to grant a one-year waiver to manufacturers who can demonstrate that their product cannot be made without BPA.

But such containers would have to be labeled as containing the chemical, and the manufacturer would have to submit a plan for complying with the ban, which would take effect 180 days after passage.

Toxicologists at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) found last year that the chemical could interfere with the brain development of fetuses and newborns.

The FDA and its European counterpart, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), have said the chemical is safe in the amounts used in such products as baby bottles.

Over 130 studies over the past decade have linked even low levels of BPA to serious health problems, breast [cancer](#), obesity and the early onset of puberty, among other disorders.

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