

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 2015

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HOUSE BILL 648

Short Title: Prohibit Toxic Flame Retardants in Bedding. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives McGrady, Harrison, Jeter, and Glazier (Primary Sponsors).  
*For a complete list of Sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly Web Site.*

Referred to: Regulatory Reform, if favorable, Judiciary II, if favorable, Finance.

April 14, 2015

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO RESTRICT THE SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF BEDDING THAT  
3 CONTAIN TOXIC FLAME RETARDANTS.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 SECTION 1.(a) Chapter 106 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
6 Article to read:

7 "Article 4I.

8 "Prohibit Bedding that Contains Certain Flame Retardants.

9 "**§ 106-65.110. Legislative findings; purpose.**

10 (a) The General Assembly finds all of the following:

- 11 (1) The safety and efficacy of organohalogen and organophosphorus flame  
12 retardants when used in bedding is doubtful when their exposure impact on  
13 human health is compared with any purported fire safety benefits.
- 14 (2) Organohalogen and organophosphorus flame retardants migrate from  
15 consumer products and can be inhaled, ingested, or absorbed through the  
16 skin. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
17 estimates that ninety-seven percent (97%) of the population has measurable  
18 quantities of organohalogen or organophosphorus flame retardants in their  
19 bodies. Scientific research indicates concentrations of these flame retardants  
20 are increasing in human tissues, including breast milk, and children carry the  
21 highest concentrations per unit of body weight.
- 22 (3) Organohalogen and organophosphorus flame retardants have been found in  
23 sediments, air, surface water, and wildlife including fish, birds, and  
24 mammals. Scientific research indicates the concentrations of these flame  
25 retardants are increasing in the environment.
- 26 (4) Organohalogen and organophosphorus flame retardants as a class are toxic  
27 due to their physical, chemical, and biological properties. Exposure to  
28 organohalogen and organophosphorus flame retardants is linked to many  
29 adverse human health impacts, including reproductive impairment,  
30 endocrine disruption, immune disorders, and neurological impacts such as  
31 decreased IQ in children, impaired memory, and learning deficits. Exposure  
32 to some organohalogen and organophosphorus flame retardants has  
33 produced cancer in laboratory animals and several forms of organohalogen  
34 and organophosphorus are recognized by state and federal agencies as  
35 probable human carcinogens.



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1           (5) Because of results from scientific studies on laboratory animals that indicate  
2 negative health impacts from exposure to organohalogen and  
3 organophosphorus flame retardants, the U.S. Environmental Protection  
4 Agency and several states have phased out the use of some organohalogen  
5 and organophosphorus flame retardants in many applications.

6           (6) Effective alternatives for achieving fire safety appear to be available for  
7 most current applications of halogenated flame retardants.

8           (b) The purpose of this Article is to protect the public health and the environment from  
9 exposure to organohalogen flame retardants and organophosphorus flame retardants in bedding.

10 **"§ 106-65.115. Definitions.**

11 As used in this Article, the following definitions apply:

12           (1) Bedding. – Defined in G.S. 106-65.95.

13           (2) Commissioner. – The Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and  
14 Consumer Services.

15           (3) Congener. – Any of two or more chemical substances related to each other  
16 by origin, structure, or function.

17           (4) DecaBDE. – Decabromo diphenyl ether or any commercial or technical  
18 mixture in which decabromo diphenyl ether is a significant congener.

19           (5) Flame retardant. – Any chemical that is added to a plastic, foam, textile, or  
20 other material to inhibit flame formation.

21           (6) HBCD. – Hexabromocyclododecane.

22           (7) Manufacturer. – Any person or enterprise that manufactures bedding  
23 containing a regulated flame retardant or any person or enterprise whose  
24 brand name is affixed to bedding containing a regulated flame retardant.  
25 Manufacturer includes, in the case of bedding that was imported into the  
26 United States, the importer or domestic distributor of the bedding when the  
27 person who manufactured or assembled the bedding, or whose brand name is  
28 affixed to the bedding, does not have a presence in the United States.

29           (8) Organohalogen flame retardant. – Any chemical containing the elements  
30 fluorine, bromine, chlorine, or iodine that is added to plastic, foam, or textile  
31 to inhibit flame formation, including, but not limited to, HBCD, TBBPA,  
32 decabromodiphenyl ethane, TCEP, TDCPP, TCPP, PBDE, DecaBDE, and  
33 any significant congener of PBDE or DecaBDE.

34           (9) Organophosphorus flame retardant. – Any chemical containing the element  
35 phosphorus that is added to plastic, foam, or textile to inhibit flame  
36 formation, including, but not limited to, TPP or RDP.

37           (10) PBDE. – Polybrominated diphenyl ether.

38           (11) RDP. – Resorcinol bis(diphenyl phosphate).

39           (12) Regulated flame retardant. – Any organohalogen flame retardant or  
40 organophosphorus flame retardant.

41           (13) Renovate or renovated. – The reworking or remaking of used bedding or the  
42 making of bedding from materials from which previous use has been made.

43           (14) Significant. – Any congener of a PBDE mixture greater than four percent  
44 (4%).

45           (15) TBBPA. – Tetrabromobisphenol A.

46           (16) TCEP. – Tris(2-chloroethyl)phosphate.

47           (17) TCPP. – Tris (1-chloro-2-propyl) phosphate.

48           (18) TDCPP. – Tris(1,3-dichloro-2-propyl)phosphate.

49           (19) TPP. – Triphenylphosphate.

50 **"§ 106-65.120. Sale or distribution of bedding that contain regulated flame retardants**  
51 **prohibited.**

1       (a) A person shall not manufacture, sell, offer for sale, or distribute for sale any bedding  
2 that contains regulated flame retardants in this State.

3       (b) This section shall not apply to the sale of used or renovated bedding.

4       (c) No manufacturer shall replace any regulated flame retardant with any chemicals of  
5 similar concern due to their toxicity, bioaccumulation, persistence, or long-range transport as  
6 identified or listed by any one of the following agencies:

7           (1) The United States Environmental Protection Agency Toxic Release  
8 Inventory List of Persistent, Bioaccumulative, and Toxic Chemicals.

9           (2) The United States Department of Health and Human Services.

10          (3) The Washington Department of Ecology List of Persistent, Bioaccumulative,  
11 and Toxic Chemicals.

12          (4) The California Environmental Protection Agency.

13          (5) The European Parliament Annex XIV concerning the Registration,  
14 Evaluation, Authorization, and Restriction of Chemicals.

15 **"§ 106-65.125. Exemptions.**

16       (a) The Commissioner may grant an exemption to any provisions of this Article for a  
17 term not to exceed two years. The exemption shall be renewable upon written application if the  
18 specific use of the regulated flame retardant continues to meet the criteria of this section and  
19 the manufacturer or other persons comply with the conditions of its original approval. The  
20 Secretary may grant an exemption for a specific use of the regulated flame retardant with or  
21 without conditions, upon finding that the applicant has demonstrated one or more of the  
22 following:

23           (1) A technically feasible alternative is not available at comparable cost.

24           (2) The potential harm to public health and the environment directly posed by a  
25 technically feasible alternative is greater than the potential harm caused by  
26 the regulated flame retardant.

27       (b) A fee to apply for an exemption under this section shall be imposed and shall be  
28 paid to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. This fee shall not exceed five  
29 thousand dollars (\$5,000). Fees collected under this subsection shall be used by the Department  
30 for the costs to administer this Article.

31 **"§ 106-65.130. Labeling requirements.**

32       The Commissioner may establish a "Meets fire safety standards without the use of chemical  
33 flame retardants" labeling program for bedding that meet fire safety standards and do not  
34 contain regulated flame retardants. The Commissioner may establish partnerships with  
35 manufacturers to enhance the market for bedding designed to retard fire without the use of  
36 regulated flame retardants and reduce the use of other potentially hazardous flame retardants in  
37 bedding. The Commissioner may develop an awards program in conjunction with the  
38 Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Stewardship Initiative to  
39 recognize the accomplishments of North Carolina manufacturers who exceed the requirements  
40 of this Article and who excel at reducing or eliminating regulated flame retardants in bedding.

41 **"§ 106-65.135. Education and outreach.**

42       (a) The Commissioner shall develop a program to inform and educate bedding retailers  
43 regarding the requirements of this Article and methods for identifying bedding that contains  
44 regulated flame retardants.

45       (b) The Commissioner may participate in a regional, multistate clearinghouse to do all  
46 of the following:

47           (1) Assist in the implementation of the requirements of this section.

48           (2) Help coordinate public education and outreach activities.

49           (3) Review risk assessments.

50           (4) Review alternatives to regulated flame retardants in bedding.

51           (5) Implement other activities related to the administration of this Article.

1 **"§ 106-65.140. Reporting.**

2 No later than January 15, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall  
3 annually report to the Environmental Review Commission regarding the use and regulation of  
4 regulated flame retardants in bedding in the State, in other states, and nationwide. The report  
5 shall include recommended additional actions to protect the public health and the environment  
6 from exposure to regulated flame retardants in bedding and the availability to manufacturers of  
7 technological and design advances and nonchemical alternatives to regulated flame retardants.  
8 This report shall also consider whether the provisions of this Article are accomplishing the  
9 purposes of this Article.

10 **"§ 106-65.145. Certificate of compliance; injunctive relief; and civil penalties.**

11 (a) If the Commissioner reasonably suspects that bedding containing a regulated flame  
12 retardant is being manufactured, sold, offered for sale, or distributed for sale in violation of this  
13 Article, the Commissioner may request the manufacturer of the bedding to provide the  
14 Commissioner with a certificate of compliance. Within 10 days of receipt of the request for a  
15 certificate of compliance, the manufacturer shall do at least one of the following:

16 (1) Provide the Commissioner with a certificate declaring that the bedding  
17 complies with the requirements of this Article.

18 (2) Notify persons that sell the manufacturer's bedding in the State that the sale  
19 of the bedding is prohibited and submit to the Commissioner a list of the  
20 names and addresses of those notified.

21 (b) If a manufacturer fails to comply with the requirements under this Article, the  
22 Commissioner may take enforcement action against the bedding manufacturer by assessing  
23 civil penalties under subsection (c) of this section, requesting the Attorney General to initiate  
24 immediate injunction proceedings to prevent the sale of the bedding, or both.

25 (c) Subject to subsections (d) and (e) of this section, a person who violates this Article  
26 is subject to the following civil penalties:

27 (1) If the violation is the person's first offense under this Article, a civil fine of  
28 not more than one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per article of bedding, not to  
29 exceed five thousand dollars (\$5,000) total.

30 (2) If the violation is the person's second offense under this Article, a civil  
31 penalty of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per article of  
32 bedding, not to exceed a total of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000).

33 (3) If the violation is the person's third or subsequent offense under this Article,  
34 a civil penalty of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per article of  
35 bedding, not to exceed a total of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000).

36 (4) For purposes of calculating a penalty under this section, a collection of  
37 bedding items that are sold as a set shall collectively constitute one article of  
38 bedding.

39 (d) If a person knowingly violates this Article, the person is subject to a civil penalty  
40 equal to three times the amount of the penalty under subdivision (3) of subsection (c) of this  
41 section.

42 (e) A civil fine imposed under this section shall be waived if it is determined that a  
43 person acted in good faith to be in compliance with this Article, pursued compliance with due  
44 diligence, and promptly corrected any noncompliance after discovery of the violation.

45 **"§ 106-65.150. Rule making.**

46 The Board of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall  
47 adopt rules to implement this Article."

48 **SECTION 1.(b)** G.S. 106-65.97 reads as rewritten:

49 **"§ 106-65.97. Manufacture regulated.**

1 All materials used in the manufacture of bedding in this State or used in manufactured  
2 bedding to be sold in this State shall be free of toxic materials and shall be made from new  
3 ~~materials.~~ materials and shall comply with Article 4I of this Chapter."

4 **SECTION 2.** The first report required pursuant to G.S. 106-65.140, as enacted by  
5 Section 1 of this act, is due no later than January 15, 2016.

6 **SECTION 3.** Section 1 of this act becomes effective January 1, 2017, and applies  
7 to bedding manufactured, offered for sale, or distributed in North Carolina on or after that date.  
8 The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.