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COMMITTEES
BUDGET
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 3 ON
EDUCATION FINANCE
HIGHER EDUCATION
NATURAL RESOURCES
JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON
CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES

February 5, 2024

Delegate Deni Taveras
6 Bladen Street, Room 206
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for HB 97 (Food safety: baby food)

Dear Delegate Taveras:

I write to express my strong support for HB 97, a bill that will help protect babies from toxic elements, including arsenic, lead, cadmium, and mercury, found in baby food. This bill will require baby food manufacturers to test a representative sample of final baby food product for levels of specific toxic elements and to make publicly available on their website the name and level of toxic elements present in their final product.

Last year, I introduced and Governor Gavin Newsom signed a first-in-the-nation bill, Assembly Bill 899, which required all baby food manufactured, held, or sold in the state of California to be tested for toxic elements and required that the results of those tests be published. Manufacturers have already begun testing products, and will be required to disclose test results in 2025.

AB 899 was inspired by a U.S. House subcommittee report. In February 2021, the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Reform Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy released their report on toxic elements in baby foods. The report found:

“Commercial baby foods are tainted with significant levels of toxic heavy metals, including arsenic, lead, cadmium, and mercury. Exposure to toxic heavy metals causes permanent decreases in IQ, diminished future economic productivity, and increased risk of future criminal and antisocial behavior. Toxic heavy metals endanger infant neurological development and long-term brain function.”¹

Based on their findings, the House Subcommittee made several recommendations, including that baby food manufacturers should be required by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to test their final products for toxic elements; and that manufacturers should be required by the FDA to report levels of toxic elements to consumers.

HB 97 acts on the House Subcommittee’s recommendations by requiring baby food manufacturers to test their finished products for lead, arsenic, cadmium, and mercury, and post the test results on their website. For these reasons, I strongly support HB 97.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Al Muratsuchi". The signature is written in a cursive style.

AL MURATSUCHI
Assemblymember, 66th District

¹ *Baby Foods Are Tainted with Dangerous Levels of Arsenic, Lead, Cadmium, and Mercury; Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy Committee on Oversight and Reform; U.S. House of Representatives; February 4, 2021; Oversight.house.gov.*