

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE GERAN TARR

House Bill 27 **Toxic Flame Retardants and Chemicals**

A September 2017 decision by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) provides guidance to manufacturers, importers, distributors, retailers, and consumers to avoid children's products, electronics, mattresses and home furniture that contain organohalogen flame retardants—a class of chemicals associated with serious human health problems.

Ironically, these products that we coat with chemicals to make them less prone to fire, become more toxic when they burn. Brominated flame retardants PBDEs (polybrominated diphenyl ethers) are in our couches, carpets, baby strollers, plastic TV casings, computers, and foam insulation.

The decision by the CPSC was a victory for the International Association of Fire Fighters, who have been pushing for reform due to occupational-related cancers, which now account for more than half of their members' line-of-duty deaths each year - the largest health-related issue facing the fire-fighting profession.

Alarmingly, companies are still not required by the federal government to report the presence of toxic chemicals in their products. House Bill 27 would prohibit a business in the state from manufacturing, distributing and selling consumer products, including children's items and upholstered furniture, that contain certain toxic chemicals in Alaska. It also requires the Department of Environmental Conservation to publish a list of chemicals of high concern to children and requires the state to participate in a national chemical clearinghouse.

The federal government has had decades to enforce regulations of toxins in products and failed. It's time for Alaska to be proactive in the safety and health of children and firefighters. I urge your support of HB 27.