2016-088

Northeastern University

Social Science Environmental Health Research Institute

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Dear Colleagues:

I write to offer my support for changing open-flame standards to smolder standards. New smolder standards in the US have been instituted without disruption of any segment of society, and now offer incredibly expanded human health safety by reducing the toxic chemicals used to meet open-flame standards. Environmental health scientists have shown many serious health effects from flame retardants, and the research on this grows daily. As the grandfather of a nearly two-year old girl, I had the privilege of successfully shopping with my wife, daughter, and son-in-law to buy baby products and crib mattresses without BFRs or other flame retardants. I hope this privilege can extend to people in the UK as well.

As an environmental sociologist, I have a long career collaborating with environmental health scientists, government agencies, professional bodies, and community organizations who are concerned with the needless use of many toxic chemicals. I have been part of the effort that led to California's monumental reform in 2013, which has subsequently become a new de facto standard. I was part of the effort to have Massachusetts take the lead after California, and to have Boston follow through, since despite it being in Massachusetts, has its own fire code. We have seen overwhelmingly support for reform from government agencies, firefighters organizations, fire scientists, public health professionals, furniture manufacturers, baby product manufacturers, hospitals, universities, and many other involved parties.

Please follow our success in ending the open-flame standard in the US, and make it possible for people in the UK to reduce exposure to dangerous chemicals.

Sincerely yours,

[redacted]

[redacted].
University Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Health Sciences
Director, Social Science Environmental Health Research Institute