BLOG

Industry, Environmental Groups React to Chemical Safety Improvement Act

MAY 30, 2013

The Chemical Safety Improvement Act, introduced on May 22 by Senators Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Vitter (R-LA), has been welcomed by both environmental and industry groups as a significant step towards much-needed TSCA reform. Although stakeholders have generally commended bi-partisan efforts towards TSCA reform, some initial critiques have surfaced.

- Environmental groups, including the NRDC, have criticized the lack of a deadline in the bill for EPA to complete a risk-based screening process for prioritizing safety reviews of existing chemicals. As written, the bill would only require EPA to "make every effort to complete the prioritization of all active substances in a timely manner."

- The Environmental Working Group and others have denounced the bill's safety standard of "no unreasonable risk of harm to human health or the environment" as inadequate to protect public health.

- While PETA has praised provisions of the bill that would encourage non-animal testing methods, it has recommended that such methods be mandatory.

- Industry groups have generally tempered their response to the bill, with the American Cleaning Institute stating that "there are still many details to work through and much language to review."

- Two former top officials in EPA's Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, Steve Owens and Charles Auer, have praised the bill as a significant improvement over TSCA.

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