

NOW IS THE TIME FOR



WHO:

CHANGE (Californians for a Healthy & Green Economy) is a growing coalition of environmental health, policy, labor, environmental justice, interfaith, and other organizations who are working to create a better system for regulating toxic chemicals in California.

Community voices, especially low-income and communities of color, are VITAL to the process of determining how chemicals should be regulated in California.

Workers, low income and communities of color are disproportionately-impacted by the health effects of chemicals in the environment and in products. We recognize that these efforts will only be worthwhile if community voices are at the table helping craft solutions to the problem. We are in the process of bringing more communities of color to participate in the process and invite you to [join us](#).

WHY:

There is a HIGHER incidence of disease.

In 1950, one in four people in the U.S. could expect a cancer diagnosis at some point in her lifetime. Today, even with fewer people smoking cigarettes and more people eating healthier diets, nearly one in two men and more than one in three women can someday expect to hear, “You have cancer.” This statistic cannot be explained simply by saying that people are living longer. Childhood cancers are also on the rise. There is an escalating incidence of many disease and disorders, including childhood asthma, male birth defects, autism, and learning disabilities.

We know that many CHEMICALS contribute to the increase in disease.

Many chemicals are widely recognized as highly hazardous, such as lead, asbestos, and mercury. Several chemicals have been linked to diseases and disabilities in laboratory and epidemiological studies.

Current policies are NOT sufficient to ensure the safety of families and children.

There are some 82,000 synthetic chemicals registered for use in the U.S. Each year approximately 1500-2000 new chemicals are added to the list. **Most of these chemicals have not been adequately tested to determine effects on human health.** Existing policies have addressed the health impacts chemical by chemical. Even chemicals that are widely recognized as highly hazardous have escaped restrictions because of a weak regulatory framework, strong pressure from chemical lobbyists, and weak U.S. EPA enforcement.

WHAT:

Shifting the burden of proof.

One practical way to **reduce the incidence of chronic disease is to decrease or eliminate the use of chemicals that contribute to health problems.** Yet communities and workers impacted by pollution released in a product’s life cycle must prove chemicals are dangerous before action is taken (if any). The public needs new laws that enable the government to manage chemicals in the same way we safeguard medicines—requiring companies to show safety before a chemical can be processed or sold.

CHANGE

Californians for a Healthy & Green Economy

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You can also find more information at www.changecalifornia.org.