



FDA changes position on BPA:

Agency acknowledges concerns over effect on infants' and children's health

After years of insisting that the hormone-mimicking chemical bisphenol A (BPA) was “safe for all uses,” the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has revised its stance.

The FDA says has “some concern” after assessing new scientific data on the affects BPA may have on the development of infants and fetuses. The agency says it will support voluntary efforts to take the chemical out of infant formula cans and baby bottles and encourage research into alternatives. It also reiterated the need to expedite further research and announced support for a “more robust regulatory framework” for BPA.

The FDA's decision adds momentum to legislative efforts to reform federal policy on toxic chemicals. Representative Markey and Senator Feinstein have led efforts to strengthen FDA oversight of BPA. Meanwhile, Senator Lautenberg and Congressman Waxman have led effort to revise the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976.

While FDA has authority over chemicals when they are used in food packaging, food additives and cosmetics, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has authority under TSCA over those same chemicals when used in other products,



including the many other uses of BPA. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson has previously announced her intention to develop an “action plan” to reduce BPA exposure, which is expected soon.

At a time of increasing public demand for more information about chemical exposure, pressure is building on lawmakers to make it more difficult for manufacturers to cloak their products in secrecy. Congress is set to rewrite chemical regulations this year for the first time in a generation.