

Michigan League of Conservation Voters

For Immediate Release

May 13, 2009

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Representatives Abandon Campaign Promises

Lansing, Mich. – In a disgraceful display of favoring politics over policy, nine state representatives reneged on a pre-election promise to protect the health of Michigan’s children today.

During the 2008 election cycle, fifty-four current State Representatives signed on to the *Healthy Kids Healthy Michigan* platform. This platform is the basis for the Safe Children’s Products Act (HB 4763-4769), which requires the manufacturers of children’s products to disclose any hazardous chemicals present in their products, such as lead, mercury, arsenic and other poisonous chemicals.

Representatives Matt Lori (R-Constantine), Bill Rogers (R-Brighton), Rick Jones (R-Grand Ledge), John Proos (R-St. Joseph), Mike Simpson (D-Jackson), Brian Calley (R-Portland), Joseph Haveman (R-Holland), Paul Opsommer (R-DeWitt), and Bill Caul (R-Mt. Pleasant) all voted against the package today, and in doing so, blatantly broke a campaign promise made to their constituents to support legislation that gives parents a right to know what kinds of toxic chemicals are in the toys their children play with.

Michigan League of Conservation Voters Executive Director, Lisa Wozniak, commented on the votes, highlighting the disregard for promises made during a campaign, “The most disturbing fact is that these legislators voted against giving parents a right to know if there are poisonous materials in products they are buying for their children. I am deeply saddened by the notion that these elected officials do not feel obligated to stand by commitments made during their campaign”. Wozniak continued, “This vote shows a complete lack of accountability on the part of these lawmakers to the people they claim to represent”.

The Safe Children’s Products Act appeared to have broad support, until Representative Arlan Meekhof (R-West Olive) introduced a controversial amendment in a Great Lakes and Environment committee hearing recently. Representative Meekhof proposed including [RU-486](#) as a “children’s product”. The committee vote then proceeded along party lines, further demonstrating the dysfunction of the State legislature. Due to the lack of bipartisan support in the House, and because of the bill’s obvious politicization courtesy of Representative Meekhof, the package will likely have difficulty passing the Senate.

Thanks to the polarized Michigan Legislature putting politics ahead of policy, parents may have to wonder if their children are playing with toxic toys.

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