



PRESS RELEASE

Friday, September 13, 2019

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**LEGISLATORS STAND TOGETHER TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION
 TO PHASE OUT ETHYLENE OXIDE EMISSIONS**

Statewide bill would protect communities from cancer-causing emissions

CHICAGO - Today, state lawmakers were joined by Stop Sterigenics, Stop ETO, Clean Power Lake County, and The Illinois Environmental Council, to announce legislation that will protect the public from ethylene oxide (EtO) exposure through a complete phase out of EtO emissions.

HB3888 sponsored by Rep. Rita Mayfield, Rep. Joyce Mason, Rep. Sam Yingling, Rep. Anne Stava-Murray, and supported by Sen. John Curran and Sen. Melinda Bush, is a comprehensive bill that will do the following:

- Phase out of EtO emissions by 2021 for sterilization facilities, and 2022 for hospitals
- Prevent emissions from hospitals or sterilizers near population centers and schools by including a regional cap
- Require air monitoring for all emissions sources
- Require reporting by the Illinois EPA on where EtO is used, how much is used, and the estimated impact
- Require reporting of EtO emissions by all manufacturers
- Explicitly prohibit the uncontrolled venting or dumping of ethylene oxide
- Enhance public information for community members, including plans of the phase-out for each site

Last year, a federal report showed significant elevations in cancer risks as a result of ethylene oxide emitting facilities. This spring, legislation was passed that set regulations on emissions and set restrictions on new emitting facilities, but now a consent order stands to re-open the Sterigenics facility, while Medline and other companies continue to emit significant amounts of ethylene oxide.

"Because reducing ethylene oxide emissions across all industries reduces and prevents cancer cases in our communities, IEC urges the state legislature to take swift action and send this bill to the governor's desk," said Jen Walling, executive director of the Illinois Environmental Council.

"This bill protects our children from cancer-causing ethylene oxide emissions by regulating the distance that emitting facilities operate from childcare facilities, schools, and residential areas. No amount of EtO is safe to breathe. This bill is another step forward by elected officials in Lake County in phasing-out emissions of EtO to protect our communities. We are thankful to Lake County's Senator Melinda Bush and Representatives Rita Mayfield, Joyce Mason, and Sam Yingling for their efforts to protect the health of our children," said Tea Tanaka of Stop EtO In Lake County.

"This is a positive step forward to have a bipartisan group of lawmakers working together to advance our long-sought ban on the use of ethylene oxide sterilization in heavily-populated areas," said State Senator Curran. "This will enable us to finally protect public health in Willowbrook. The industrial use of this deadly gas has no place near schools, homes, and public spaces."

"It's extremely important that we were able to put together a bipartisan coalition of legislators and community activists to protect our citizens from Ethylene Oxide emissions. With the help of this coalition, in May of this year the General Assembly passed the strictest regulations on Ethylene Oxide in the United States. I feel confident that we will rid our communities of dangerous concentrations of Ethylene Oxide," said State Senator Melinda Bush.

"This bill is another step in the right direction, and I look forward to working with the sponsors with the goal of keeping communities across the state safe," said Leader Jim Durkin.

"In order to stop the EtO crisis, legislators must come together and support the same bill. I will be fully supporting the introduced legislation. We cannot allow companies to poison the people for profits," said State Representative Sam Yingling.

"This session we passed the strongest EtO regulations in the nation. We will continue our work until we are absolutely sure that our community is safe," said Rep. Joyce Mason.

"Far too many people have become sick and died from irresponsible sterilization companies' usage of highly toxic ethylene oxide. It's time we as legislators step up and say: no more," said Rep. Anne Stava Murray. "Stopping this known carcinogen from being used near people-centers couldn't be more important. This bill creates a feasible, bipartisan roadmap to do just that."

"This bill is critical to cut out ethylene oxide emissions from our communities and take the steps needed to make sure families have clean, safe air to breathe," said State Representative Rita Mayfield.

"Environmental Justice communities like Waukegan continue to bear the burden of toxic pollution. This bill is a step forward to bringing equity to Lake County's most vulnerable community members with cumulative environmental health risks. Let's continue to work towards no one being exposed to ethylene oxide, a dangerous chemical that increases our likelihood of getting various cancers, chronic and acute diseases. At a time when our federal environmental agencies are ignoring science, we look to our state officials to strengthen environmental protections and keep our families and especially our children safer," said Celeste Flores co-chair Clean Power Lake County.

"Our goal is to protect families from breathing air laced with carcinogens. This bill, supported by Stop EtO in Lake County and Stop Sterigenics, puts public health first on a statewide basis, limiting and phasing out