

September 11, 2023

Dr. Michal Freedhoff  
Assistant Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention  
Washington, D.C

Re: EPA-HQ-OPPT-2023-0311-0001

Dear Dr. Freedhoff,

We strongly support efforts to expand the successful Safer Choice and Design for the Environment (DfE) programs to other categories of products.

As a voluntary partnership program, Safer Choice brings together a wide variety of interested parties to advance safety and sustainability in products. Safer Choice works closely with companies to help them understand the chemical composition of their products and to select safer alternatives to chemicals that pose potential health or environmental concerns.

Products with the Safer Choice label help consumers and commercial buyers identify products that meet performance standards and are made with safer ingredients. Safer Choice has provided a proven road map for consumer and business purchasers, retailers, product formulators, and ingredient manufacturers seeking to invest in and implement safer solutions while incentivizing markets for safer products. Consistent with EPA's past practices, we urge EPA to expand Safer Choice to product categories that have the greatest potential for chemical exposure.

The Safer Choice program provides a scientifically robust positive approach to safer chemistry that serves as a complement to federal and state efforts to regulate toxic chemicals used in products. For example, California, Washington, Oregon, Maryland, Colorado, Minnesota, and Maine restrict certain toxic chemicals often used in personal care products and other states are considering doing the same. Many retailers also have developed lists of prohibited ingredients in beauty and personal care products that already incorporate EPA's approach to safer alternatives.

As you know, the Food and Drug Administration works to ensure beauty and personal care products are produced in a sanitary environment and monitors the marketplace for contaminated products. While the FDA has the power to review substantiation records for ingredients of concern, FDA has not published a list of recommended ingredients for formulators. Adding beauty and personal care products into the Safer Choice program, including the expansion of the Safer Chemicals Ingredients List (SCIL), could provide an important national pathway for consumers and commercial buyers seeking to purchase safer products.

For decades, the FDA has relied on EPA expertise to set tolerances for pesticides in food, so the development of a framework to recognize beauty and personal care products that use safer ingredients is consistent with previous and ongoing cooperation between the agencies. Safer Choice and the SCIL support more rigor in product claims, as compared to informal product claims such as "eco-friendly", "all-natural", and "sustainable" that may not be backed up by a

certification or justified by specific attributes. Not only would expanding Safer Choice make it easier for consumers and retailers to identify and purchase safer products, but it would also enable brands to market their products to consumers who are increasingly concerned about the safety of ingredients in beauty and personal care products, and wary of greenwashing.

Our organizations believe the expansion of Safer Choice to other products, especially those with the greatest potential for human exposure, would be a “win-win” for public health and the environment, consumers, and the business community.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Adrian Dominican Sisters, Portfolio  
Advisory Board  
Alaska Community Action on Toxics  
Allergy Standards Limited  
American Sustainable Business Network  
Beautycounter  
Black Women for Wellness  
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners  
Center for Environmental Health  
Change Chemistry  
ChemFORWARD  
Clean Production Action  
Clean Water Action/Clean Water Fund  
Congregation of St. Joseph  
Consumer Reports  
Credo  
Ecology Center  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Environmental Working Group (EWG)  
Green Science Policy Institute

League of Conservation Voters  
McFadden and Associates  
Mercury Policy Project  
Mercy Investment Services, Inc.  
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)  
Naturepedic Organic Mattresses & Bedding  
Oregon Environmental Council  
Parnassus Investments  
Pollution Prevention Resource Center  
Providence St. Joseph Health  
Proxy Impact  
Responsible Purchasing Network  
Ritual  
Safer States  
Sephora USA  
Seventh Generation  
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia  
Toxic-Free Future  
WE ACT for Environmental Justice  
Women's Voices for the Earth