

Rory Stewart OBE MP
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

1st July 2015

Dear Minister

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at DEFRA. We understand that your responsibilities include the regulation of industrial chemicals and the EU REACH chemicals legislation. We would like to request a meeting to introduce ourselves and discuss a number of key issues of concern relating to REACH and the UK's policy on Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs).

As you will know, there is growing global concern¹ and an increasing wealth of scientific data that suggests there is a link between our daily exposures to EDCs and our vulnerability to ill health and disease, as well as adverse effects on wildlife and the environment. However, the EU has been slow to respond to growing demands for action in this area and EDCs remain inadequately regulated. The EU were scheduled to complete a review of EDC criteria by the end of November 2013, but lengthy delays and continued 'paralysis by analysis' at EU level has meant that the EDC criteria is still yet to be defined. We would like to discuss how the UK might push for action and progress in this area.

We also have serious concerns about certain aspects of the REACH chemicals legislation. In particular the apparent willingness of the European Chemical Agency (ECHA) to propose authorisation of chemicals when safer alternatives are readily available. See, for example, the authorisation of DEHP in a wide range of PVC products². Such recommendations from ECHA and rubber stamping from SEAC to grant authorisation seriously undermines the REACH goals of protection and the promotion of more innovative and safer substitutes.

We would also be interested in talking to you regarding the overlap between chemicals policy and the Circular Economy.

Finally, we would like to discuss the direction of UK chemicals policy, including the role and future of the Chemicals Stakeholder Forum.

We hope you can find time in your diary to meet with us to discuss this important subject.

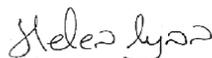
We look forward to hearing from you.



Lynn Ladbrook
Chief Executive
Breast Cancer UK



Jamie Page
Executive Director
Cancer Prevention
& Education Society



Helen Lynn
Coordinator
Alliance for Cancer
Prevention



Michael Warhurst
Executive Director
CHEM Trust



¹ See for example:

WHO/UNEP (2012) State of the science of endocrine disrupting chemicals <http://www.who.int/ceh/publications/endocrine/en/>;
President's Cancer Panel (2008-2009) Reducing Environmental Cancer Risk, What We Can Do Now http://deainfo.nci.nih.gov/advisory/pcp/annualReports/pcp08-09rpt/PCP_Report_08-09_508.pdf;

Parliament Magazine (January 2015) 'Europe-wide cancer group calls for action on hormone disruptors'

<https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/europe-wide-cancer-group-calls-action-hormone-disruptors>

European Environment Agency (2012). The Weybridge+15 (1996–2011) Report: The impacts of endocrine disruptors on wildlife, people and their environments <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/the-impacts-of-endocrine-disruptors>

Report of the Interagency Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Coordinating Committee (IBCERCC) (2013). 'Breast Cancer and the Environment Prioritising Prevention Prioritising Breast Cancer'. http://www.niehs.nih.gov/about/assets/docs/ibcercc_full_508.pdf

2013 Berlaymont Declaration on Endocrine Disruptors found at http://www.ipcp.ch/Berlaymont_August_7.pdf (Accessed September 2013) http://www.brunel.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/300200/The_Berlaymont_Declaration_on_Endocrine_Disruptors.pdf

² See for example article by CHEM Trust at <http://www.chemtrust.org.uk/replacing-chemicals-with-safer-alternatives-or-protecting-dirty-industry/>