



MAFC POSITION STATEMENT

Michigan House Bill 4465

House bill 4465, introduced by Representatives Law, Miller, Hopgood, Gonzales and Warren, would amend PA 451 of 1994 and prohibit the manufacture and distribution of mattresses, furniture, televisions, and computers containing decabromodiphenyl ether (DECA-BDE.) DECA-BDE is one of a class of flame retardant chemicals known as polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE.) These chemicals are similar to PCBs which were banned in 1976 due to their toxicity and environmental persistence. Research indicates that these compounds persist in the environment and bioaccumulate in the food chain and human tissues.

The Executive Board of the Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs has passed a resolution supporting HB 4465 for the following reasons:

- DECA-BDE and its family of flame retardant chemicals known as polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDE) have been identified as having adverse physiological and developmental impact on humans.
- There are readily available substitute products that do not exhibit these effects. A number of large manufacturers have voluntarily stopped using PBDE chemicals and are using alternative flame retardants.
- When PBDE compounds are exposed to fire they burn and release dense fumes and a highly corrosive gas known as hydrogen bromide which expose firefighters to additional chemical hazards.