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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, June 27, 2005**

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**BANNED FLAME RETARDANTS BILL ADVANCES TO
GOVERNOR'S DESK**

SALEM – The Senate Floor is the next stop for a bill that will ban certain flame retardants from being used in Oregon.

The Senate voted unanimously today to accept the amendments recommended by a conference committee on Senate Bill 962, which Rep. Berger co-sponsored with Senator Monnes Anderson (D-Gresham) in response to recent studies that demonstrate the rapid buildup of these flame retardants (aka PBDE's) in people living in the Pacific Northwest.

“I am both excited and relieved that SB 962 will make it to the Governor's desk before this session ends,” said Rep. Berger. “We have only recently become aware of the danger of PBDE's. SB 962 is an important and appropriate first step in protecting Oregonians, young and old, from the threat of PBDE's.”

SB 962 bans two forms of toxic flame retardants (pentaBDE and octaBDE) and instructs the Oregon Health Department to evaluate a third (decaBDE). The impacts of these flame retardants are especially damaging to children, particularly developing infants. Low-level exposure to these toxins can cause irreversible brain development damage and impact critical hormone function, memory, learning and behavior.

A 2004 analysis of these toxins in the breast milk of Oregon women showed levels twice as high as those in women across the Pacific Northwest, and 20 to 40 times higher than those found in Japanese and Swedish women. Studies also found high levels of PDBE's in Oregon Salmon and orcas in the Puget Sound.

The Senate passed SB 962 (25-2) on April 20. The House passed SB 962 unanimously on June 7.

This press release and an archive of previous press releases issued by Rep. Berger's office are available on the web at: www.leg.state.or.us/berger.

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