

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1708

To amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a program of research regarding the risks posed by the presence of dioxin, synthetic fibers, chemical fragrances, and other components of feminine hygiene products.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 26, 2015

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself and Mr. RANGEL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a program of research regarding the risks posed by the presence of dioxin, synthetic fibers, chemical fragrances, and other components of feminine hygiene products.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Robin Danielson Femi-
5 nine Hygiene Product Safety Act of 2015”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds as follows:

1 (1) Feminine hygiene products are widely used
2 by women in the United States today, but there is
3 not enough research on the components of these
4 products.

5 (2) Women may be exposed to substances in
6 tampons and other menstrual products for as long
7 as 60 years over the course of their reproductive
8 lives. The average woman may use as many as
9 16,800 tampons in her lifetime. A woman on meno-
10 pausal hormone therapy may use as many as 24,360
11 tampons in her lifetime.

12 (3) Trace amounts of dioxins can be found in
13 tampons or other feminine hygiene products. The
14 Environmental Protection Agency and the Inter-
15 national Agency for Research on Cancer, an arm of
16 the World Health Organization, have concluded that
17 dioxins are a probable human carcinogen (cancer-
18 causing agent).

19 (4) The Food and Drug Administration (re-
20 ferred to in this section as the “FDA”) has histori-
21 cally relied on data provided by manufacturers of
22 feminine hygiene products in determining product
23 safety.

24 (5) Although the FDA currently requires tam-
25 pon manufacturers to routinely monitor dioxin levels

1 in raw materials and finished tampons, this informa-
2 tion is not readily available to the public. The FDA
3 should consider whether to expand regulation to in-
4 clude other types of feminine hygiene products and
5 a broader list of contaminants.

6 **SEC. 3. RESEARCH ON DIOXIN AND OTHER POTENTIALLY**
7 **HARMFUL COMPONENTS OF FEMININE HY-**
8 **GIENE PRODUCTS.**

9 Part F of title IV of the Public Health Service Act
10 (42 U.S.C. 287d et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
11 the following section:

12 **“SEC. 486C. RESEARCH ON DIOXIN AND OTHER POTEN-**
13 **TIALLY HARMFUL COMPONENTS OF FEMI-**
14 **NINE HYGIENE PRODUCTS.**

15 “(a) RESEARCH.—

16 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of NIH, in
17 collaboration with the Director of the Office, shall
18 provide for the conduct or support of research to de-
19 termine the extent to which the presence of dioxins,
20 synthetic fibers, chlorine, and other components (in-
21 cluding contaminants and substances used as fra-
22 grances, colorants, dyes, and preservatives) in tam-
23 pons and other feminine hygiene products—

24 “(A) poses any risks to the health of
25 women who use the products, including risks re-

1 lating to cervical cancer, endometriosis, infer-
2 tility, ovarian cancer, breast cancer, immune
3 system deficiencies, pelvic inflammatory disease,
4 toxic shock syndrome, and bacterial and yeast
5 infections; and

6 “(B) poses any risks to the health of chil-
7 dren of women who used such products during
8 or before the pregnancies involved, including
9 risks relating to fetal and childhood develop-
10 ment.

11 “(2) REQUIREMENT REGARDING DATA FROM
12 MANUFACTURERS.—Research under paragraph (1)
13 shall include research to confirm the data on tam-
14 pons and other feminine hygiene products submitted
15 to the Commissioner of Food and Drugs by manu-
16 facturers of such products.

17 “(3) DEFINITION.—For purposes of paragraph
18 (1), the term ‘feminine hygiene products’ means
19 tampons, pads, liners, cups, sponges, douches, wipes,
20 sprays, and similar products used by women with re-
21 spect to menstruation or other genital-tract secre-
22 tions.

23 “(b) REPORTS.—Reports on the results of research
24 under subsection (a) shall be periodically submitted to the
25 Congress, the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, the Ad-

1 administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and
2 the Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commis-
3 sion. Such reports shall be made available to the public
4 through the data system and clearinghouse program es-
5 tablished under section 486A, or through other appro-
6 priate means.

7 “(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the
8 purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized
9 to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for
10 each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2020.”.

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