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## **New Information: Some Soft Drinks Contain Cancer- Causing Benzene**

### **Will Congress Prevent States from Protecting and Warning their Residents?**

#### **OPPOSE H.R. 4167**

Dear Colleague:

Two days after the House debated H.R. 4167, the press reported that some soft drinks in the U.S. contain the cancer-causing chemical benzene.

According to the *Salt Lake Tribune*, the Food and Drug Administration originally discovered this 16 years ago but never told the public, "because the beverage industry told the government it would handle the problem, and the FDA thought the problem was solved."

Unfortunately, benzene is still in soft drinks. In fact, the FDA has found levels in some soft drinks higher than what it found in 1990, and two to four times higher than what is considered safe for drinking water. Children are particularly at risk because marketing of many soft drinks is targeted directly at children.

Amazingly, the bill the House will consider tomorrow, H.R. 4167, would prevent any state from addressing this issue or requiring manufacturers to warn consumers about it—unless FDA gives the state permission to do so. Given FDA's consistent failure to notify the public of the presence of benzene in soft drinks, it makes no sense to force states to ask FDA for permission to protect the public's health.

We know the soft drink lobby supports H.R. 4167. Perhaps now we know why. I have attached a copy of this article for your information.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey