



## **The Balloon Council reports...**

### **Spring 2001 Report**

#### **BALLOON RELATED LEGISLATION:**

##### **Massachusetts**

Legislation that would ban the manufacture and sale of balloons that do not biodegrade within 60 days (House Bill 2948) is being sponsored by Representative DiMasi (D).

- This bill was placed under “study”, which means that it will not be released for a vote by the full House. However, the committee could use results of the study to justify future consideration of the bill.
- Once again the bill did not receive active consideration. It is likely that the sponsor will reintroduce the bill in the next session, as he has for the past several years. However, it is unlikely that there will be any movement, given the bill's history.

Once again, Representative Kujawski (D) is sponsoring legislation that would prohibit the release of 10 or more balloons.

- The bill (House Bill 1247) was introduced on December 6, 2000.
- No action has been taken on the Bill.

##### **New Jersey**

Senator Connors (R-9) and Senator Bark (R-8) introduced legislation that would authorize municipalities to prohibit the release of 5 or more balloons into the

environment during a 24-hour period (Senate Bill 1122).

- This bill was referred to the Senate Environment Committee, but has not received committee consideration.
- The New Jersey Legislature meets continuously, and is now in the first year of a two-year legislative cycle.

Legislation that would require warning labels to be placed on helium balloons or balloon packages, as well as balloon display racks (Senate Bill 1121) was introduced by Senator Connors (R-9) and Senator Bassano (R-21).

- The required label would read: “Release of balloons into the atmosphere may cause serious harm to people and wildlife. Ingestion and entanglement may cause serious injury or death to wildlife.”
- This bill was referred to the Senate Environment Committee. TBC will continue to monitor its status and work to defeat this measure.
- The New Jersey Legislature meets continuously, and is now in the second year of a two-year legislative cycle.

## **New York**

Legislation that would ban the release of 25 or more balloons and would apply to both latex and metallized balloons has been introduced in the Assembly and the Senate.

- Assembly Bill 299 was introduced on January 3, 2001 and referred to the Committee on Environmental Conservation.

## **LATEX ALLERGY RELATED LEGISLATION:**

### **Pennsylvania**

Senator Mellow (D-22) sponsored a measure, which urges the Governor to establish a committee to study the adverse effects of latex.

- Senate Resolution 43 passed both houses and was sent to the Governor on November 29, 2000.

### **Rhode Island**

Legislation that would require elimination of the use of latex products in hospitals by June 30, 2002 has been reintroduced. Effectively, this legislation would ban all latex balloons from hospitals in Rhode Island.

- House Bill 7654 was introduced Representative Henseler (D-44). There

was no activity on this bill before the end of the legislative session and it has not yet been reintroduced.

## **LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE:**

The TBC legislative hotline received more than thirty phone calls this quarter. Many callers reported hearing about TBC from a variety of Internet web sites. Calls from retailers and distributors of balloon products focused on the following issues:

- Balloon releases
- Use of balloons as signage
- The impact of balloons on the environment
- The biodegradability of balloons
- Information on helium
- Educational material on balloons for science projects and presentations
- The banning of latex balloons by schools and hospitals due to concerns about latex allergies.

Retailers continue to rely on the TBC balloon hotline to ensure that their balloon practices are conforming to state and local laws.

For more information, please contact:

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