



Dear Members of Congress,

As women of faith we write to you to express our concern about the safety of cosmetics. As mothers, sisters, and daughters, we are committed to ensuring that children and women of child-bearing age are protected from toxic chemicals, especially in our personal care products. Women, along with children, low-income communities, communities of color, and God's Creation are uniquely vulnerable to the unregulated toxic chemicals found in personal care products. We believe it is the role of the federal government to regulate such chemicals and ensure personal care products are safe for all of us.

Our faith traditions teach us that we are made in God's image and that we must care for our bodies for they are sacred. Yet the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) lacks the authority to ensure that the shampoos, deodorants, makeup, lotions, and hand sanitizers that we use everyday are safe for human health and God's Creation. Studies have shown products marketed to some of the most vulnerable in our society, including women, children, and communities of color, contain carcinogens, endocrine disruptors, and developmental and reproductive toxicants. Despite our individual efforts to care for our bodies as God intended, we cannot feel confident that the everyday personal care products we purchase are safe.

Some of the ingredients in cosmetics are also harmful to the very workers who are manufacturing or using these products. For instance, one study found that inhalation of some forms of titanium dioxide may increase risk for lung cancer or damage brain cells among workers who manufacture makeup, sunscreen, or other products containing it. Nail technicians and workers are exposed for ten hour days in poorly ventilated spaces to chemicals linked to cancer and birth defects. Because of these chemicals, their very livelihoods contribute to a decline in their health. Knowing that the products we use can contribute to the suffering of others is a challenge to our conscience as people of faith.

We are called to protect Creation. Toxic chemicals found in personal care products often make their way into waterways and, eventually, into our drinking water. There is a strong link between endocrine-disrupting chemicals found in personal care products and the increase of intersex fish species in the nation's rivers. Some sunscreens also contain chemicals believed to contribute to the bleaching of coral reefs. These chemicals put into peril the health of God's Creation.

We call on you to ensure that the FDA has the authority and resources it needs to ensure the safety of cosmetics for vulnerable populations and God's Creation through policies that:

- Grant authority to the FDA to ensure the safety of ingredients used to formulate cosmetics
- Ban the use of chemicals linked to cancer and reproductive harm in cosmetics.
- Test the safety of chemicals before they are approved for market use in cosmetics and develop a process and timetable to test chemical ingredients already on the market. The process should prioritize testing for chemicals known to cause adverse health impacts and that are found in people's bodies.
- Ensure full labeling and disclosure of chemicals in personal care products, including contaminants and chemicals in fragrance and salon products. Ensure that the public and workers manufacturing or using cosmetics have access to information on the health effects of these chemicals.
- Guarantee adequate funding so the FDA Office of Cosmetics and Colors has the support it needs to provide effective oversight of the cosmetics industry.
- Ensure that cosmetics found to contain toxic ingredients remain neither available for sale in the United States nor manufactured and exported for sale in other countries, threatening the health of our sisters, brothers, and other members of Creation across the world.

As women of faith, we thank you for your attention to this critical issue. We look forward to working with you to address the impacts of these chemicals on vulnerable communities and God's good Creation.

Signed,