July 23, 2019

Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Executive Chamber
Capitol Building
Albany, N.Y. 12224

RE: A.6295-A (Englebright)/S.4389-B (Kaminsky)

Dear Governor Cuomo,

The Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter urges you to sign into law A.6295-A/S.4389-B, an act to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to prohibiting household cleaning products and personal cosmetic products that contain 1,4-dioxane.

This legislation would prohibit the sale of any household cleaning products and personal cosmetic products that contain 1,4-dioxane, starting December 31, 2021 – which will in turn keep more toxic chemical contamination out of New York’s waterways.

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 1,4-dioxane is a likely human carcinogen, and while it may not be intentionally added to household products and personal cosmetic products, it is still found in many of these products as it is typically formed as a contaminant during the manufacturing process. Additionally, once these products are used and washed down the drain, 1,4-dioxane will end up New York’s waterways, further contaminating drinking water as well as streams and rivers.

In 2017, Environmental Working Group (EWG) conducted a study of 1,4-dioxane and the most contaminated waterways in the country affected by this chemical. Long Island was found to have one of the highest contamination levels in the country, with over 700,000 people exposed. The levels of 1,4-dioxane were 6-8 times higher than the EPA’s Negligible Risk Level of 0.35 parts per billion.

Phasing out harmful and unnecessary chemicals in cleaning products and personal cosmetic products will have a lasting effect on the health of New Yorkers and the environment. Sierra Club is devoted to protecting public health and the environment by decreasing exposure to hazardous substances through
reducing toxic chemicals in consumer products and in educating consumers about the potential risks of hazardous substances such as endocrine disruptors, formaldehyde, lead, mercury, and other persistent toxins. This legislation aligns with this goal and is why we are urging you to act immediately and sign A.6295-A/S.4389-B into law. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Roger Downs
Conservation Director
Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter