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P.C.B. bill passes house by Representative Getty

Dolton — A bill retracting and eventually banning the manufacture, sale and use of compounds containing concentrations of polychlorinated biphenyls P.C.B.'s, sponsored by Representative L. Michael Getty (D-Dolton) and Representative Daniel M. Pierce (D-Chicago) has been passed by the Illinois House of Representatives and sent to the Senate for their consideration.

Since their introduction some forty-five years ago, P.C.B.'s have been used in a variety of commercial and industrial products, such as transformers, capacitors, paints, paper, inks, plastics, adhesives, sealants and hydraulic fluid.

P.C.B.'s are persistent pollutants which do not break down easily in the environment. One-half of the 1.4 billion pounds of P.C.B.'s manufactured over the past forty-five years have entered the environment through discharges to the air, water and land.

"I am pleased that the House of Representatives agrees with Representatives Getty and Pierce, with Representative Pierce and myself that the need is great to regulate this dangerous chemical," stated Representative Getty.

"The most significant fact behind the introduction of this bill is that P.C.B.'s have

an average half life in the environment of twenty years, with some having a life of about two hundred years. They are a continuing hazard," explained Representative Getty. "The sooner we stop using them and putting them into our environment the safer it will be for all of us." Getty continued.

Research into P.C.B.'s has found that they are known to cause significant adverse affects in fish and aquatic life. In addition, they have been found in laboratory tests to cause reproductive failures, gastric disorders, skin lesions and tumors in mammals.

More than one thousand Japanese developed yusho disease in 1968 from use of rice oil contaminated with P.C.B.'s. Their symptoms included eye discharge, severe acne, ulcers of the uterus, hearing loss and neurological disorders. Pregnant women suffered miscarriages and stillbirths, and surviving infants suffered from abnormal pigmentation as a result of transplacental transmission of P.C.B.'s. Since then, Japan has banned the manufacture of P.C.B.'s and has controlled and limited their import. They have also been outlawed in some eight other countries and several states.

House Bill 3566, the

Getty-Pierce bill, bans the manufacture, sale and use of P.C.B.'s in Illinois, except in closed capacitors and electrical transformers, by January, 1977. Manufacturers and users of P.C.B.'s for closed systems will have two additional years to develop adequate substitutes before the banning of P.C.B.'s in transformers and capacitors will go into effect.

"I wish to commend the industries involved in the use of P.C.B.'s for their cooperation in agreeing to an orderly and workable transition to adequate and safe substitutes for P.C.B.'s," said Getty. The Monsanto Corporation is the principal manufacturer of the produce and electronic and transformer manufacturers are the principal users in closed systems.

An amendment was also added in committee hearings to allow the Pollution Control Board to recommend earlier discontinuation even in transformers and capacitors if a safe substitute is found before the two year research time is concluded. The Pollution Control Board is also empowered to extend the period not to exceed an additional two year limit if specific need exists. Proposed Federal legislation will ban all use in three or four years.