

*This material is distributed by Broydrick & Associates on behalf of Malaysian Rubber Export Promotion Council (MREPC)*

*Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.*

Dear Senator Paxton,

Broydrick and Associates represents the **Malaysian Rubber Export Promotion Council (MREPC)**. We wanted to share with you our opposition to TX SB2445 which relates to the use of latex gloves by certain health care and food service personnel. We do understand that the bill will not receive a hearing this session of the legislature.

Let us express our gratitude to you for your decision.

This bill is no longer necessary. Many years ago, there was a problem with latex allergies with health care workers. Over the last thirty years, the process for glove manufacturing has been drastically changed in two ways. First, the protein content in gloves has been dramatically reduced or eliminated. It is the protein that results in allergic reactions. Second, nitrile gloves that are latex free are readily available in the marketplace.

There still many advantages to latex gloves especially those with a very low latex content which doesn't result ion allergic reactions. Among the advantages of latex gloves are:

1. Superior protection against foodborne illnesses: Workers wear gloves in the food industry to protect consumers against infectious microorganisms or other contaminants. Low-protein, powder-free natural rubber latex gloves have been consistently demonstrated to provide superior barrier performance compared to alternatives like nitrile, vinyl, and polyethylene gloves. Replacing latex gloves with gloves with less effective barrier protection could increase the risk of foodborne illnesses.
2. Little evidence of consumer safety risk: There is little evidence to suggest an unacceptable consumer safety risk if foods are prepared using natural rubber latex gloves. Studies have shown that protein transfer from low-protein, powder-free latex gloves to food is undetectable. Furthermore, the U.S. FDA's Food Advisory Committee concluded in 2003 that the evidence linking latex proteins in food to allergic reactions was weak and primarily based on anecdotal evidence.
3. Improved manufacturing technologies: Today's low-protein, powder-free latex gloves have drastically reduced protein content compared to older generations. Many hospital studies in the U.S., Europe, and Canada have shown that the use of these gloves has markedly reduced sensitization and incidences of latex allergies in the workplace.
4. No reported deaths due to latex protein allergy through food ingestion: Unlike allergies to milk, peanuts, and fish, which have been estimated to cause the death of more than 150 allergic individuals annually in the U.S., there are no reported deaths caused by latex protein allergy through food ingestion.

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In conclusion, the use of low-protein, powder-free latex gloves should not be banned, as they provide superior protection against foodborne illnesses and pose minimal consumer safety risks. It is important to continue using these gloves as an effective food safety tool to protect public health. Although, as mentioned, we are aware that the bill will not have a hearing this session, we would like to discuss the possibility of not having introduced again in the future.