Current Laws and Industry Initiatives Provide a Comprehensive Approach to Chemical Safety

Even as certain parts of America's chemical management system require updating, a robust system of laws, government programs, and industry initiatives exist to oversee the use of chemicals, enhance scientific understanding, and make chemical safety information available to the public. Consumers and lawmakers should have confidence there is a strong safety net in place.

Federal Laws Regulating Chemicals in Commerce

The regulatory component of this system is composed of more than a dozen federal laws that regulate the safety of chemicals in commerce, including:

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) gives the EPA authority to regulate industrial chemicals before and after they enter the market. TSCA authorizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to require manufacturers to submit information on both new and existing chemicals, which the agency uses to evaluate safety. TSCA also provides EPA the authority to limit or prohibit the use of any substance that is found to pose an unreasonable risk. ACC believes it is time to modernize TSCA to reflect achievements in science and changes in the marketplace.

The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetics Act (FFDCA) requires pre-market approval by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of many new drugs, food additives, medical devices, and materials that come into contact with food and drugs, and medical devices.

The Federal, Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) sets requirements for pesticide product testing and approval by (EPA).

The laws above are but a part of a host of federal laws and regulations that are designed to govern the safe use of chemicals. Others, such as the Clean Water Act (CWA) and the Clean Air Act (CAA), work along with TSCA to protect human health and environment. Still more, such as the Consumer Product Safety Act (CPSA) and the Federal Hazardous Substances Act (FHSA), along with FFDCA, work to maintain the safety of consumer products.

Complementary Programs Working to Enhance the Safe Use of Chemicals

These laws are complemented by a variety of programs and initiatives created to develop new tools and processes to more effectively interpret chemical screening data and increase the public availability of chemical safety information including:

- **ToxCast**: A cutting-edge EPA program under development that uses advanced science tools to help understand how human body processes are impacted by exposures to chemicals and help determine which exposures are most likely to lead to adverse effects. The initial phase of the program included over 500 state-of-the-art rapid tests that screened 1,000 environmental chemicals for potential toxicity. EPA recently announced the next phase, which will use a new high-speed robot screening system to test 10,000 different chemicals.

- **Long-Range Research Initiative (LRI):** An international, industry-led effort that supports innovative research programs to help fill the gaps and further our understanding about chemicals and the links between exposure to chemicals and their effects on human health and the environment. Part of LRI's mission is to invest in research that will help interpret the results of new technologies for toxicity testing like those being used in the ToxCast program.

- **The High Production Volume (HPV) Challenge Program:** A collaborative effort between industry and the EPA that makes publicly available 17 types of information about chemicals. The program covers more than 95 percent of the U.S. market for commercial chemicals by volume and has produced more publicly available information on more chemicals in less time than any government initiative.

- **Global Product Strategy (GPS):** A program created by the members of the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) to improve communication and transparency about chemicals. Under this program companies around the world have committed to provide easy-to-understand product safety summaries available online. To date, more than 1000 safety summaries are available at www.icca-chem.org, and the number continues to grow.