WASHINGTON -- A new House bill proposes to prohibit the manufacture after July 1, 2010 of “electroindustry products” that contain lead, mercury, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, polybrominated biphenyls (“PBBs”), and polybrominated diphenyl ethers (“PBDEs”) above the maximum concentration levels specified in the European Union’s RoHS Directive.

On May 14, Michael Burgess (R-TX) introduced to the Energy and Commerce Committee the so-called "Environmental Design of Electrical Equipment Act (EDEE) Act" (H.R. 2420), which aims to codify standard Federal regulations in the use of certain substances in electrical products and equipment. The bill, which would amend the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976, attempts to eliminate disparities among state restrictions.

H.R. 2420 stipulates that no electroindustry product shall be manufactured after July 1, 2010, that contains a concentration value greater than 0.1% by weight of lead, mercury, hexavalent chromium, PBB and PBDE as measured in any homogeneous material contained in the electroindustry product, or a concentration value greater than 0.01% of cadmium as measured in any homogeneous material contained in the electroindustry product.

The bill defines "homogeneous material" as a material of uniform composition throughout that cannot be mechanically disjointed into different material.

Electroindustry refers to any product or equipment that is directly used to facilitate the transmission, distribution, or control of electricity, or that uses electrical power for arc welding, lighting, signaling protection and communication, or medical imaging, or electrical motors and generators.

There are a number of exceptions listed, including high-voltage (300V or more) products or equipment; signaling protection and communication systems and products, including healthcare communications and emergency call systems; various transportation information and medical diagnostic gear; and eletrical metering equipment.

Also exempted is lead in solders with high melting temperatures, including lead-based alloys containing 85% or more lead by weight, and solders for die mounting in LEDs, the electrical

connection within IC flip-chip packages; planar array ceramic multilayer capacitors; and PCBs and point-to-point soldered assemblies, up to 40% lead by weight, for use in transmission, distribution, power supply, or control devices in electrical outlet or switch boxes.

For the full text of the bill, click here .