

Office of Representative James E. Vallee
State House, Room 238

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 23, 2008

CONTACT:

Erin Souza

(617) 722- 2380

VALLEE MOVES TO MAKE MASSACHUSETTS SAFER FOR CHILDREN

Proposal prohibits the sale of dangerous recalled products

BOSTON, Mass. – Only eight states nationwide ban the sale of recalled products, and Massachusetts is not one of them. Representative James E. Vallee (*D-Franklin*) is taking action to change that by fighting against the influx of millions of dangerous children’s products that have been streaming into the United States.

“Children have been choked, strangled and burned by toys,” Vallee said. “Massachusetts is a leader in so many other areas, and it’s a shame that we haven’t yet stepped up to make our state safer for children. This needs to be an absolute priority”

Vallee has filed a bill that bans the sale of hazardous toys and any recalled children’s product, and it charges the state’s Department of Public Health (DPH) with maintaining and updating a comprehensive list of children’s products that have been deemed unsafe.

While it is illegal for manufacturers to sell toys containing small parts or lead, these toys still end up in our homes. Federal law also requires toy manufacturers to notify regulators within 24 hours if they find a dangerous defect in their product, yet a Canadian study last year found that of all the toys recalled since 1988, 76 percent involved design flaws.

The bill, An Act Relative to Children’s Safety, classifies an item as unsafe if it does not conform to all federal laws and regulations setting forth standards for children’s products, it has been recalled for any reason by the federal government or manufacturer and the recall has not been rescinded, or if an agency of the federal government has issued a warning that the product’s use poses a safety hazard and the warning has not been rescinded.

Under this bill, DPH will make this list of unsafe children’s products available on its website and encourage links to and from state, federal and private websites that advertise children’s products of any kind. DPH must also notify licensed or registered day care providers and pediatricians of the listed products.

To help further ensure children's safety in day care centers, Vallee's proposal prohibits Massachusetts day care facilities from using or having on their premises any unsafe children's products.

###