

Campaign for Healthier Solutions

2615 Camino Del Rio South, Suite 400 • San Diego, CA 92108 • (619) 838-6694 • www.nontoxicdollarstores.org

February 4, 2015

Mr. Stephane Gonthier
President and Chief Executive Officer
99 Cents Only Stores
4000 East Union Pacific Avenue
City of Commerce, CA 90023

Dear Mr. Gonthier,

As the leader of one of the largest franchises of discount retailers in the United States, we know that you recognize your responsibility for the safety of your customers and employees, and for the wellbeing of the communities where your stores are located.

We appreciate the commitment, made on 99 Cents Only's Product Safety page, that you are "committed to our customers' safety and satisfaction, as well as helping to lead the way to a healthy way of life for people of all income levels." Your commitments to inspecting and testing many products, to prompt and effective implementation of recalls, and to making "healthy food and other quality merchandise affordable to everyone" demonstrate your understanding of the growing importance of these issues to customers and communities.

The 142 organizations from across the U.S. listed below are concerned that certain products acquired from your supply chain, and available on your shelves, may represent a danger to the health of your customers. We believe that certain chemicals of high concern – especially the Hazardous 100+ Chemicals – are present in the products you offer. Most of these chemicals have been formally identified as hazardous by government bodies based on strong credible scientific evidence. These substances have been scientifically linked to chronic diseases and health conditions such as cancer, reduced fertility, learning and developmental disabilities, behavioral problems, obesity, diabetes and asthma. These chemicals may be found in the bodies of newborn babies, children and adults; in household dust and indoor air; in our food supply; in our workplaces; and in the environment. And we believe that you have other options for the chemicals and products in your supply chain.

We believe you have the responsibility to not promote the proliferation of these chemicals in our communities and to not contribute to our already disproportionate burden. The communities that you serve are predominantly low-income and people of color, and these communities are already disproportionately exposed to environmental harm and suffer from economic and health disparities. We are also aware, as are you, that your customers often lack convenient access to other retailers, or rely on your stores to be able to purchase main staple food and personal care items because of their financial disparities. Your customers both want and deserve to have safer and healthier products, and you have the resources and the opportunity to provide them.

We urge you to take the necessary steps to identify, disclose, replace and safely substitute products laden with hazardous chemicals and, instead, provide safer product alternatives to your consumers. You have the ability – and responsibility – to work with your suppliers to reduce and eliminate hazardous chemicals with truly safer alternatives, or to stop selling their products. Doing so will help you reduce the various financial and regulatory liabilities, and reputational risks, that may be associated with carrying chemically intensive products in your stores, and vastly improve your company’s sustainability profile. You can also improve your company’s performance as you please your customers by providing safer, healthier alternatives.

We request to meet with you to discuss how we can offer our assistance and scientific expertise in this area to explore and promote the options available to improve your merchandise in a manner that would benefit your company and, at the same time, help prevent negative health impacts that may be associated with exposure to chemicals in your products. We would like to explore immediate actions and corporate policies that can eliminate toxic chemicals in your supply chain. Other major retailers like Walmart and Target have already taken major steps to work with their suppliers to begin disclosing, reducing, and eliminating toxic chemicals in their supply chain. The BizNGO Guide to Safer Chemicals describes steps and strategies that many leading businesses have taken to address this challenge. We would like you to join them in taking a stand against selling products containing chemicals of high concern. Having read your company’s mission and social responsibility statements, we believe that you recognize your responsibility and will want to do what is best for your loyal customers and the future of your company.

Our team looks forward to the opportunity to discuss in person how we can work together to achieve the goal of safer and healthier products for our communities, and a successful business for you. We would appreciate receiving a written response to our request. We look forward to working together for healthier, safer and more sustainable communities and planet, as well as for responsible and profitable business and economy. If you have any questions, and to schedule a meeting, please contact Jose T. Bravo, Coordinator of the Campaign for Healthier Solutions at (619) 838-6694 or jose@comingcleaninc.org.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this leadership commitment.

Sincerely,

Jose T. Bravo
Coordinator
Campaign for Healthier Solutions

The Hazardous 100+ chemicals list is available at:
<http://saferchemicals.org/chemicals/>

The BizNGO Guide to Safer Chemicals is available at:
<http://www.bizngo.org/safer-chemicals/guide-to-safer-chemicals>

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