



March 26, 2025

The Honorable Caroline Menjivar, Chair
Senate Committee on Health
1021 O Street, Room 3310
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 646 (Weber Pierson) Prenatal Vitamins

Dear Chair Menjivar,

Consumer Reports¹ is pleased to support SB 646 (Weber Pierson), on Prenatal Vitamins, which strengthens maternal and fetal health protection by requiring testing and public disclosure of four toxic heavy metals—arsenic, cadmium, mercury, and lead—in all prenatal vitamins sold or manufactured in California.

Prenatal vitamins play a critical role in supplementing the nutritional needs of pregnant individuals, helping to prevent birth defects, low birth weight, and pregnancy complications. While a well-balanced diet is the best, many Americans, including Californians, do not consistently consume adequate amounts of nutrients. Consequently, prenatal vitamins, which typically contain folic acid, iodine, iron, and other essential nutrients, are widely recommended and are essential to ensure expectant mothers have the nutrients they need.

Recent studies have raised concerns about the level of heavy metals in prenatal vitamins. A December 2023 [report](#) from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found lead—a heavy metal for which no safe exposure level exists—in half of the prenatal vitamins tested. A newly published [study](#) found that 83% of 156 commercially available prenatal vitamins tested positive for lead, with 15% exceeding the California Proposition 65 threshold for daily lead consumption (0.5 ug), while 7 of 9 prescription prenatal vitamins tested positive for lead with 3 samples (one-third) exceeding the Prop 65 threshold for lead.

Despite these risks, there are currently no federal or state regulations specifically addressing heavy metal contamination in prenatal vitamins. SB 646 is a necessary step to improve

¹ Founded in 1936, [Consumer Reports](#) (CR) is an independent, nonprofit and nonpartisan organization that works with consumers to create a fair and just marketplace. Known for its rigorous testing and ratings of products, CR advocates for laws and company practices that put consumers first. CR is dedicated to amplifying the voices of consumers to promote safety, digital rights, financial fairness, and sustainability. The organization surveys millions of Americans every year, reports extensively on the challenges and opportunities for today's consumers, and provides ad-free content and tools to 6 million members across the U.S.

transparency, empower consumers to make informed choices, encourage manufacturers to reduce contamination, and lay the groundwork for potential safety standards.

For all these reasons, Consumer Reports supports SB 646 and respectfully requests your “aye” vote. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours,

Brian Ronholm
Director, Food Policy

Dr. Michael Hansen, Ph.D.
Senior Scientist