

Sen. Schumer sounds false alarm on grocery bag lead threat

By ACSH Staff — November 15, 2010

Following a probe last week by the *Tampa Tribune* that found some reusable grocery bags manufactured in China contained “concerning” levels of lead, Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) is [requesting](#) ^[1] further federal investigation of the bag’s lead content. The bags don’t seem to pose any threat to the food they tote around, but rather may serve as a potential environmental hazard after they are thrown away by leading to the accumulation of lead in landfills.

“When our families go to the grocery store looking for safe and healthy foods to feed their kids, the last thing they should have to worry about are toxic bags,” Sen. Schumer said in a statement — even though the *Tampa Tribune* acknowledged that the lead found in the bags is not easily extracted or capable of “leaching” out into food.

ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross was a bit confused by the logic, or lack thereof. “What exactly is the harm of lead in landfills compared to all of the other waste products and microbes that are found there?”

“This seems like an awfully remote risk for someone such as Sen. Schumer to pay attention to,” adds ACSH's Dr. Elizabeth Whelan.

“I bet his suits are from China. Next, he will be worrying about lead traces in the fabric,” quips ACSH's Dr. Josh Bloom. “I hope his suits comply with the silly CPSIA law that limits lead in everything, even basketball hoops.”

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[1] <http://www.gainesville.com/article/20101114/ARTICLES/101119669/1105?Title=Probe-is-sought-of-lead-in-reusable-grocery-bags->