



February 5, 2018

David S. Taylor
Chief Executive Officer
Procter & Gamble
909 Third Avenue, 21st Floor
New York, NY 10022

Dear Mr. Taylor:

We write to urge you to alter the appearance and packaging of your Tide PODS detergent packets. We have been concerned about accidental poisonings from detergent pods among young children and people suffering from dementia for over two years and have introduced legislation to lessen poisoning risks. There is renewed opportunity - and urgency - at this moment in time. As you know, teenagers and young adults across the country have been engaging in the "Tide Pod Challenge," an alarming social media stunt that involves the deliberate ingestion of a detergent packet.

We are encouraged by your willingness to meet with our offices and to take steps to stem child poisoning through voluntary measures such as bittering agents and warning labels on the external packaging. However, these steps have failed. According to the American Association of Poison Control Centers, 10,395 laundry pod injuries were reported in 2013; that number rose to a peak of 12,594 in 2015 before returning to 10,570 in 2017 - demonstrating there has been little progress. Pods also continue to be especially dangerous to adults with dementia, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, with at least 6 deaths being attributed to them since 2012. The recent "Tide Pod Challenge" has created a new category of victims, with 86 cases of intentional exposure in the first three weeks of 2018 alone. While your recent public service campaign to stem the video "Tide Pod Challenge" is to be commended, it falls far short of what is needed to prevent the continuing problem of accidental poisonings, as opposed to intentional ingestion by teenagers.

We carry legislation in the New York State Legislature (S100/A4646) to prevent poisonings and injuries by requiring child-resistant packaging and individual wrapping for each detergent pod stating: "WARNING: HARMFUL IF PUT IN MOUTH OR SWALLOWED. EYE IRRITANT. KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN." Our

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legislation also aims to make pods less visually appealing to children, teens, and adults with dementia by requiring manufacturers to change the design of laundry detergent packets to a uniform color. In addition, you and other manufacturers must use a stronger bittering agent to prevent ingestion of pods, reduce their pleasant smell, and make them feel more firm. All of these changes would make laundry pods less attractive to children, teens, and adults with mental disabilities.

While our legislation would only protect New Yorkers, we urge Procter & Gamble and all manufacturers of colorful detergent pods to offer the same protections to the nation and immediately commit to the precautions set forth in our legislation. It's time that you recognized the danger to those least able to protect themselves from a poisonous product packaged like candy. If not, these products should be removed from store shelves as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Aravella Simotas
NY State Assembly, 36th District



Brad Hoylman
NY State Senator, 27th District