

Quiet lawmaker prompts national environmental law changes

By Susan Ferriss, Sacramento Bee

Her face clouded, just a bit, as she talked about failing to ban the chemical BPA in all baby bottles sold in California.

But Fran Pavley, an unassuming state senator from the hills north of Los Angeles, has many victories to savor. Her impact on American environmentalism shows how a state legislator can leverage California's power to force national change.



Fran Pavley

This year, Pavley's bill limiting levels of the hazardous metal cadmium in children's jewelry became state law. California's sheer market size is likely to force manufacturers to change all kids' jewelry, which is often imported, for the national market.

Pavley won again in November when California voters rejected a proposal to block the state's ambitious greenhouse gas-capping law, which Pavley had championed in 2006.

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