A LETTER FROM Greta Thunberg

WHY Jane Fonda Spent the Night in Jail

THIS YEAR’S GREEN BEAUTY STARS

SOPHIE TURNER ON LOVE, FAME, AND THE GROWING JONAS FAMILY

STAND FOR EARTH

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promising? Perhaps. But if you ask many chemists and prod-
uct creators about these developments, you may not hear a sigh of
relief. "I roll my eyes every time someone wants to create a
new brand and the first thing out of their mouth is 'clean,'" says
developer Tamara Kamen, who has worked with companies
such as Estée Lauder and Peter Thomas Roth. "I truly do not be-
lieve that topical skin care can be dangerous systemically." When
asked about research linking ingredients like parabens and
phthalates to hormone disruption and even cancer, Kamen says
the test doses are at levels "disproportionate to what you would
put on your face." In other words, it's the dose that makes the
poison. After all, even water can kill you if you drink too much.

The stark difference of opinion is most acute online, of course,
and laced with plenty of vitriol. Scroll through the comments
sections of Insta-famous beauty chemists like LabMuffin-
beauty/Science of Australia or anonymous beauty vigilante
Estée Laundery, and you'll find fiery disagreements about what's
bad for your body, what's bad for the environment, and what's
blasphemy for reforming. Grab some popcorn and prepare to Goo-
gle a few ingredients—or 100.

What may finally bring down the gavel on some of these
debates is the Cosmetic Safety Enhancement Act of 2019, intro-
duced in the U.S. House of Representatives last December—only
the second time in 60 years there's been a hearing about cosmetic
reform on the federal level—and two new bills in California.
The key proposals in the act require cosmetic companies to register
formulas with the FDA and mandate better ingredient transpa-
rency. California's bills have similar demands. One would require
the disclosure of fragrance and flavor chemicals deemed toxic to
human health and the environment but that non-toxic chemicals
remain confidential. The second bill would outlaw 13 of the
most hazardous chemicals still permissible in the States, including
formaldehyde, lead, mercury, asbestos, and two phthalates and
parabens already banned by the European Union.

More than 1,000 ingredients are currently off-limits in the
EU. In comparison, the United States has only prohibited 11.
While some big beauty companies formulate products for their
international markets simultaneously (making them de facto
compliant with the strictest laws), the last time the U.S. updat-
ed its list was in 1938, decades before retinol or long-wearing
waterproof carbon black mascara was even invented.

Surprisingly, the FDA does not regulate the beauty industry
as a matter of course (nor does any other federal agency), and the
terms green, botanical, pure, safe, non-toxic, vegan, and, yes,
clean are not regulated by any governing body (the term organic
is regulated by the USDA, not the FDA). It's up to a company
to test whether its products are safe. Does that happen? Four
sources I spoke with used the phrase "the Wild West" to describe
the beauty industry: "No one is minding the store when it comes
to the safety of cosmetic products," says Janet Nudelman, direc-
tor of the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics, which is sponsoring
the bills in California.
in Massachusetts, where researchers identify preventable

UN statistic that it takes 10,000 liters of water to grow a kilo of

Richards, the founder and CEO of clean beauty brand

Gregg Renfrew, who testified in December at a hearing on

Jennifer Fisher, jenniferfisher.com. PAGE 133: Jumpsuit by

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THE DIRTY TRUTH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 155

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