

**Kids in Danger · Consumer Federation of America
Consumers Union · National Research Center for Women & Families**

**For Immediate Release
Friday, November 16, 2012**

Media contacts:

Nancy A. Cowles, Kids In Danger, 312-595-0649, nancy@kidsindanger.org
David Butler, Consumers Union, 202-462-6262, dbutler@consumer.org
Rachel Weintraub, Consumer Federation of America, 202-904-4953,
rweintraub@consumerfed.org
Diana Zuckerman, National Research Center for Women & Families
(202) 223-4000, dz@center4research.org

**Ban on the sale of crib bumper pads adopted by Maryland
Consumer groups laud action to protect infants**

Chicago, IL -- A coalition of consumer groups praised the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and its Director Joshua Sharfstein for [announcing](#) a ban on the sale of crib bumper pads, effective June 21, 2013.

The decision followed a more than year-long investigation by the Maryland Department examining the safety of crib bumper pads. The department conducted its own review of evidence, convened a panel of health experts, held two public meetings, and reviewed public comment. The department concluded that the risks crib bumper pads pose towards infants far outweigh any potential benefits.

Maryland becomes the first state in the nation to ban the sale of crib bumper pads. Chicago, Illinois adopted a ban that became effective in April 2012. In addition, most states already prohibit the use of the product in licensed child care facilities.

The groups -- Consumer Federation of America, Consumers Union, National Research Center for Women & Families and Kids in Danger -- hailed the act as a major step forward in protecting infants.

“Our organization has been working with [families](#) whose children suffocated on this unnecessary crib decoration,” stated Nancy Cowles executive director of Kids In Danger. “We applaud Director Sharfstein and his department for their thorough study of the issue and courage in taking the lead on this safety issue.”

Consumer, safety and health care organizations all agree that a baby sleeps safest alone, on their back in a bare crib that meets current safety standards. Adding soft padding to that environment in the form of pillow, bumper pads or comforters increases the risk of suffocation or entrapment.

Kids in Danger · Consumer Federation of America Consumers Union · National Research Center for Women & Families

The American Academy of Pediatrics recently updated their safe sleep guidelines to warn against the use of bumper pads.

“While standards might be appropriate to address the safety of many products, for this unnecessary decorative item which poses danger to infants, Maryland’s action to ban the product will be more effective,” stated Rachel Weintraub, Legislative Director and Senior Counsel of the Consumer Federation of America. “The regulation gives the department the ability to move to a standard if one is developed that is as protective of safety as the ban.”

The regulation defines baby bumper pads as “a pad or pads of non-mesh material resting directly above the mattress in a crib, running the circumference of the crib or along any of the interior sides of the crib, and intended to be used until the age that an infant pulls to stand.” The ban does not apply to vertical bumpers that wrap tightly around each individual crib rail or to mesh crib liners. The Department nonetheless does not recommend the use of these or other novel products.

“This ban will save lives and serve as a model for other states,” added Diana Zuckerman, President of the National Research Center for Women & Families. “As a Maryland resident, mother, and president of a nonprofit group that is dedicated to improving the health and safety of kids and adults, this decision makes me very happy.”

“Action on the state level has historically been effective in addressing emerging hazards and bringing them to the general public’s attention,” concluded Ami Gadhia, Senior Policy Counsel of Consumers Union, the policy arm of Consumer Reports. “We urge CPSC to consider national action against this suffocation hazard.”