



News release: Tuesday, May 19, 2015

Advocates Applaud Federal Efforts to Keep Consumers Safe

As Consumer Product Safety Commission leaders testify before Congress, six groups praise the agency's commitment to effective safety rules, education, and an informed consumer

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Six groups advocating for consumer safety today praised the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) for its steadfast commitment to protecting the public from hazardous toys, furnishings, outdoor vehicles, and other products around the home. As CPSC's commissioners testify before a House of Representatives subcommittee, Consumer Federation of America, Consumers Union, Kids In Danger, Public Citizen, the Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists, and U.S. PIRG applauded CPSC's achievements and encouraged the agency to keep moving forward in support of vital agency priorities.

In 2008 – responding to regulatory deficiencies made woefully clear by consumer injuries, deaths, and millions of hazardous products that reached store shelves – Congress passed the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA) with large bipartisan majorities. This Act provided CPSC with the tools, resources, and responsibilities necessary to identify product hazards and take proactive action to keep consumers and their children safe.

Through the implementation of CPSIA, the agency has developed numerous robust safety standards with a major positive impact on consumers. Because of CPSC's work, infant and children's products such as bath seats, portable bed rails, cribs, walkers, toddler beds, play yards, bedside sleepers, carriers, bassinets, strollers, and swings are now manufactured to be far safer, and must be tested and certified by a third party to ensure they meet tough safety requirements. The crib standard is notably the strongest in the world, offering infants the safe sleep environment that their parents have a right to expect.

The consumer incident database *SaferProducts.gov*, also required under CPSIA, is a valuable tool for consumers, researchers, doctors, and the CPSC itself that has received more than 24,000 incident reports since its launch in March 2011. We commend CPSC leadership for its continued support for the database and to related research identifying possible safety trends.

The six groups also applaud CPSC for its work to address potential safety risks in products with demonstrated hazards or troubling injury patterns. This includes the agency's final rule

prohibiting high-powered magnets that sent thousands of individuals to the emergency room and caused at least one death. It includes CPSC's proposed ban on children's toys and child care articles with unsafe phthalates, as identified by a scientific advisory panel. It includes the pending safety standards for corded window coverings, which lead to the strangulation and asphyxiation deaths of at least one child every month, and for recreational off-highway vehicles (ROVs), which lack adequate lateral stability and occupant protection and lead to dozens of injuries and deaths every year. The groups thank CPSC for moving the regulatory process forward on these important issues and urge the agency to finalize those rules that are pending.

Consumer Federation of America is an association of nearly 300 nonprofit consumer organizations that was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education. www.consumerfed.org

Consumers Union is the public policy and advocacy division of Consumer Reports. Consumers Union works for a fair, just, and safe marketplace for all consumers, and to empower consumers to protect themselves. Consumer Reports is the world's largest independent product-testing organization. Using its more than 50 labs, auto test center, and survey research center, the nonprofit rates thousands of products and services annually. Founded in 1936, Consumer Reports has over 8 million subscribers to its magazine, website, and other publications. www.consumersunion.org

Kids In Danger (KID) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting children by improving children's product safety. KID was founded in 1998 by the parents of sixteen-month-old Danny Keysar who died in his Chicago childcare home when a portable crib collapsed around his neck. www.kidsindanger.org

Public Citizen is a national, nonprofit consumer advocacy organization representing consumer interests in Congress, the executive branch and the courts. www.citizen.org

The Union of Concerned Scientists the leading science-based nonprofit working for a healthy environment and a safer world. UCS combines independent scientific research and citizen action to develop innovative, practical solutions and to secure responsible changes in government policy, corporate practices, and consumer choices. The Center for Science and Democracy at the Union of Concerned Scientists is dedicated to strengthening the essential role of science, evidence-based knowledge, and constructive debate in the U.S. policymaking process. www.ucsusa.org

U.S. PIRG is the federation of state Public Interest Research Groups. PIRGs are non-profit, non-partisan organizations that take on powerful interests on behalf of their members. www.uspirg.org

Media contacts: Rachel Weintraub, Consumer Federation of America, (202) 387-6121
William Wallace, Consumers Union, (202) 462-6262
Nancy Cowles, Kids In Danger, (312) 595-0649
Christine Hines, Public Citizen, (202) 454-5135
Celia Wexler, Union of Concerned Scientists, (202) 331-6952
Ed Mierzwinski, U.S. PIRG, (202) 461-3821