



**Consumer Federation of America**



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**Consumer Organizations Petition the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission  
to Take Action on Adult Portable Bed Rails**  
*Groups seek to protect consumers from death and injury*

Washington, D.C. – Today, Consumer Federation of America (CFA), the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (Consumer Voice), bed rail activist Gloria Black, and 60 other organizations<sup>1</sup> filed a [petition](#) with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) requesting a ban of adult portable bed rails or mandatory standards if a ban is not accepted. The groups are also asking CPSC to recall dangerous bed rails and refund consumers. For the purpose of the petition, portable bed rails are considered to be those that are sold and marketed directly to the public, and intended to be used with a home-style bed. This would include those marketed on the Internet, in department stores and other retail outlets, directly by manufacturers, and also in medical supply stores.

CPSC has been aware of deaths and injuries involving bed rails since 1985. In an October 11, 2012 report from CPSC, “Adult Portable Bed Rail-Related Deaths, Injuries, and Potential Injuries: January 2003 to September 2012,” CPSC documented that in that nine year period there were an estimated 36,900 visits to hospital emergency wards due to incidents related to both portable and non-portable bed rails. CPSC also reported 155 portable bed rail deaths for that same time period. These statistics represent only a fraction of the actual number of alleged bed rail related deaths. According to CPSC’s 2012 report, these deaths and injuries most commonly occur when the victim is “caught, stuck, wedged, or trapped between the mattress/bed and the bed rail, between bed rail bars, between a commode and rail, between the floor and rail, or between the headboard and rail.”

“For nearly three decades, the public has been led to believe that use of bed rails makes a person ‘safer.’ What the CPSC revealed in their recent study on portable bed rails this past fall was an indisputable fact that tens of thousands of bed rail users, as they were rushed off to emergency departments, had their lives not made safer at all, but, rather, *threatened* by use of bed rails,” stated Gloria Black. “It is high time that products which can turn so easily into death traps are

taken off the market, and that we protect our frail elderly from dangerous products in the same manner as we do for our children.”

“Too many people have been seriously injured or killed while using adult bed rails that are marketed as products to increase the safety of consumers,” stated Rachel Weintraub, Legislative Director and Senior Counsel with Consumer Federation of America. “These asphyxiation and entrapment deaths and injuries have not been adequately prevented by any voluntary efforts by bed rail manufacturers. These incidents could and should have been prevented by strong federal efforts, which is why we are urging the CPSC to take action today.”

“The large number of organizations, both national and state, who have joined in this petition, indicates the deep collective interest of so many organizations seeking CPSC involvement in addressing hazards posed by adult bed rails. Our organizations are united in calling for CPSC to take all necessary action to protect vulnerable adults from death and injury related to these products,” stated Sarah Wells, Consumer Voice Executive Director.

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*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.*

*The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (Consumer Voice) is a national non-profit organization that advocates for quality care on behalf of long-term care consumers across all care settings. The membership of Consumer Voice consists primarily of consumers of long-term services and supports, their families, long-term care ombudsmen, individual advocates, and citizen advocacy groups. Consumer Voice has over 37 years' experience advocating for quality care*

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<sup>i</sup> These groups include: Georgia Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Resident Councils of Washington, California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform, Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County, Inc., Delaware Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Centralina Area Agency on Aging, Senior Care Cooperative, Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program – Area Agency on Aging, PSA 3, Barren River Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Council on Aging - Orange County, District 9 Long-Term Care Ombudsman, San Francisco Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, The Alliance for Better Long Term Care, Maryland Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the Elderly (CARIE), Rainbow Connection Community, Michigan Campaign for Quality Care, King George County Social Services, Catherine Hunt Foundation, Inc., ABLE Ombudsman Program, Kansas Advocates for Better Care, Family Council of Ellicott City Health and Rehabilitation Center, NICHE (Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders), Detroit Area Agency on Aging, Indiana Association of Adult Day Services, Massachusetts Advocates for Nursing Home Reform, Our Mother's Voice, New York City Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, Kentuckians for Nursing Home Reform, Areawide Aging Agency, Ohio Office of the State LTC Ombudsman, Ombudsman Program, Alamo Area Agency on Aging, California Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Terence Cardinal Cooke Health Care Center, Long Term Care Community Coalition, Nursing Home Victim Coalition, Inc, PA State LTC Ombudsman Office, NY Office of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman, New Hampshire Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman, Levin & Perconti, Chicago, Bethany Village Senior Action, Snohomish County Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, DC Coalition on Long Term Care, Legal Assistance Foundation (LAF), Friends of Residents in Long Term Care, Our Mother's Voice (NC Chapter), Advocacy, Inc., California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association, Montgomery County Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging, OWL – The Voice of Older and Midlife Women (national), PHI – Quality Care through Quality Jobs (national), National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (national), National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs (national), National Senior Citizens Law Center (national), Service Employees International Union (SEIU) (national), Direct Care Alliance (national), United Spinal Association (national), Center for Medicare Advocacy (national), National Research Center for Women and Families (national)