

Energy and Commerce Subcommittee Approves Comprehensive Consumer Protection Legislation

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NEWS RELEASE

Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman

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Contact: Jodi Seth or Carrie Annand, 202-225-5735

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Washington, D.C. — The Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection today approved its comprehensive consumer protection and Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reform bill by voice vote in an open markup session, after adoption of a bipartisan amendment that strengthened the bill. The bill is now reported to the full Committee for consideration.

H.R. 4040, the Consumer Product Safety Modernization Act of 2007, was introduced this month by Reps. John D. Dingell (D-MI) and Joe Barton (R-TX), Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce; Reps. Bobby Rush (D-IL) and Cliff Stearns (R-FL), Chairman and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection; and a bipartisan group of 46 original cosponsors. The bill establishes an outline for improving and reforming the nation's consumer product safety system with provisions that include increased funds and staffing for the CPSC, a nationwide ban on products containing lead beyond specified minute amounts, third-party testing and certification for children's products, and mandatory tracking labels for children's products. Last week,

the subcommittee held a hearing to gather input from stakeholders on the proposed legislation, including CPSC Commissioners, industry representatives, consumer safety advocates and health care professionals.

“I am proud of the bipartisan spirit with which this legislation was drafted,” said Dingell. “I am also grateful to all the stakeholders who have contributed to the advancement of a workable, commonsense bill that will strengthen our Nation’s capacity to protect its consumers and children. It is my sincerest wish to see the Consumer Product Safety Modernization Act of 2007 enacted into law as soon as possible.”

“This is a bipartisan piece of legislation that authorizes desperately needed resources to the Commission and dramatically reforms the Consumer Product Safety Act, as well as the Federal Hazardous Substances Act, both of which are enforced by the CPSC,” said Rush. “After decades of neglect, this bill restores the CPSC to its rightful place of prominence and gives it the necessary tools to grapple with the global marketplace and protect American consumers, particularly children, from dangerous and defective products. This bill, which we plan to continue to improve as it moves through the legislative process, fulfills that pledge I made six months ago.”

The legislation is the product of several months of research and investigations conducted by the committee into the recent widespread findings of lead in children’s products imported from China, as well as the nation’s system for recalling defective or tainted products. In August 2007, the Committee sent letters to 19 retailers and importers requesting information on their findings of lead. On September 19 and 20, the Committee held a hearing on lead in children’s products and the resulting recalls.

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Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce

2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515