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NEWS RELEASE

Committee on Energy and Commerce

Rep. John D. Dingell, Chairman

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Bill Would Implement Stricter Safety Standards for Children's Products, Consumer Product Safety Commission Reform

Washington, DC — Four leaders of the Committee on Energy and Commerce today announced a bipartisan package of legislation designed to overhaul consumer protection standards and install major staff and budget changes at the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

The Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, Reps. John D. Dingell (D-MI) and Joe Barton (R-TX), joined the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee's Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection, Reps. Bobby Rush (D-IL) and Cliff Stearns (R-FL), to unveil the legislation, the product of a months-long committee investigation of consumer safety. Some of the key provisions of this bipartisan bill include: a

nationwide limit for lead levels in toys that would decrease in the coming years; a third-party testing requirement for certain children's products; significant increases in the CPSC's funding levels over the next three years; and reinforced CPSC authority, allowing the Commission a greater role in overseeing product recalls.

"We've had a failure in our product safety system that allowed millions of dangerous and unacceptable products to pass right under our noses with the potential to harm the people who use them," said Dingell. "This legislation will stop harmful products from entering our marketplace, and will greatly improve the ability and speed with which we can recall products when needed. I am proud of the collaborative efforts that went into drafting this legislation and I look forward to guiding this bill into law."

"Over the last 15 years, the CPSC has seen an erosion of staff and the aging of its facilities. This bill will authorize a new lab and restore the CPSC to its original five commissioners," said Barton. "Of more immediate importance, it will set a tough federal standard for lead content in toys and then aggressively push that limit even lower to make sure that children aren't sickened by their playthings. I hope that another effect of the new testing requirements will be to remove the doubt in parents' minds about whether the toys they buy are safe for their kids. The committee does its best work when we work together, and I very much appreciate Mr. Rush's and Mr. Dingell's bipartisan approach in our committee's efforts to protect consumers. Partisanship gets all the press, but this strong bill is more evidence of what Democrats and Republicans can achieve when we don't let politics get in the way of good policy. I also want to credit the CPSC's staff who provided the technical assistance and constructive criticism that helped us make the legislation both practical and potent."

"I'm pleased that members on both sides of the aisle worked to produce this historic, bipartisan piece of legislation. It took hard work and compromise for all of us to get here today, and of course it was well worth the effort. I believe this bill exemplifies Congress at its very best. It shows the American people what we are capable of accomplishing when we all work together in a bipartisan manner," said Rush.

"This year has seen a record number of consumer product recalls, particularly for children's toys that exceeded our Federal lead paint standard," said Stearns. "Our legislation will help catch the problem before it arrives in the stores and in our homes by requiring what many companies already do - require mandatory testing and certification of children's products."

Next Tuesday, November 6, the Committee will hold a hearing on the proposed legislation.

The Committee has conducted an investigation into the recent widespread findings of lead in children's products imported from China, and 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.

Please see the attached summary of the bill. For information on the Committee's consumer protection work, please visit <http://energycommerce.house.gov>.

Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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