



Chairman Ander Crenshaw

*Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
House Committee on Appropriations*

**FY 2017 Budget Hearing: Consumer Product Safety Commission
February 25, 2016
Opening Statement As Prepared**

The hearing will come to order.

I would like to welcome our witnesses, Chairman Elliot Kaye and Commissioner Ann Marie Buerkle. This is both your second time testifying before this Subcommittee, I appreciate you returning today and testifying on the Consumer Product Safety Commission's fiscal year 2017 budget request.

The Commission has the important job of overseeing tens of thousands of consumer products used by almost all Americans every day. The success of the Commission is not only measured in public safety and education, but in the cooperation and engagement of all stakeholders including consumers, manufacturers, retailers, and Congress. Therefore, I would like to highlight the essential role that stakeholder engagement plays in the Commission's mission.

It is critical that the Commission lives up to its mission of protecting consumers through product recalls, educating the public on product safety hazards and ensuring the safety of consumer products. However, mission success also means engaging in a cooperative relationship with the private sector to ensure that American commerce is not adversely burdened by unnecessary rules and regulations.

This Commission has engaged in a series of highly controversial rulemakings without engaging impacted stakeholders. While I am encouraged to hear that progress is being made to address issues surrounding Recreational Off-highway Vehicles in a manner that is acceptable to all parties involved, it concerns me that so often the Commission's efforts to involve stakeholders are ad-hoc and reactive in nature.

As I mentioned earlier, stakeholder engagement also means engagement with Congress. I have been crystal clear on my desire for the Commission to take meaningful steps to reduce third-party testing burdens on small businesses. For two consecutive years, this Subcommittee specifically designated \$1 million for third-party test burden reductions. Yet, I am frustrated that there has been no real tangible relief to small businesses despite the amount of resources the Commission has been provided. Instead, and against the will of Congress, the Commission continues to pursue changes to the detriment of the Commission's highly successful voluntary recall program.

The President's fiscal year 2017 budget request for the Commission totals \$130.5 million, a \$5.5 million increase over enacted. I would like to stress that in a time of scarce resources it is of the utmost importance that the Commission prioritize its activities to where the Commission has clear authority to act and where the need for consumer protection is greatest.

However, I was encouraged to see the Commission re-evaluate its proposal to create a Commission-led nanotechnology research center and has, instead, formed a partnership with the National Institutes of Health

on nanotechnology research. This seems to me to be a much more measured approach and I am very interested to learn more about this initiative and the \$3 million requested for research into the chronic hazards of nanotechnology.

Once again the Commission's budget request includes the authority to collect a user fee from importers in an effort to expand the import surveillance pilot program. The Committee has rejected the Commission's proposal to collect an import fee the past two years and I'm curious to learn if anything in your proposal has changed. Representing JAXPORT in Jacksonville, Florida I know firsthand the importance of surveillance of consumer goods and I support the Commission's efforts to stop noncompliant products from entering our nation's ports, but I have significant concerns with the lack of collaboration and discussion with importers in this monumental policy change.

Chairman Kaye, you have said one of your top priorities when it comes to rulemakings will be addressing product safety hazards. So I look forward to hearing from you and Commissioner Buerkle today on what the CPSC is doing to prevent tragic and regrettable injuries from consumer goods.

Once again, welcome to both of you, and I look forward to your testimony.

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