

**Opening Statement of Republican Leader
Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Hearing on “Protecting Americans from Dangerous Products: Is the
Consumer Product Safety Commission Fulfilling Its Mission?”
April 9, 2019
*As Prepared for Delivery***

Good morning and welcome to the Consumer Protection and Commerce Subcommittee hearing with the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Thank you to Acting Chair Ann Marie Buerkle, our former colleague, as well as Commissioners Biacco, Feldman, Kaye, and Adler for being here today to discuss the Commission’s mission and important work.

Even though it has only been six months with all five of you at the Commission, I’m looking forward to hearing directly from you.

I’ll begin by congratulating my good friend and former colleague Chair Buerkle for advancing through the Senate Commerce Committee last week.

My hope is the Senate will act swiftly to confirm you as Chair of the Commission.

Constitutional concerns with agency action prior to your nomination and the delays with your nomination, clearly demonstrate why your confirmation and leadership are so needed at the agency.

Chair Buerkle, you have been steadfast in your efforts to advance the safety mission of the agency, even when you spent the majority of the last two years in the minority at the Commission.

During your tenure, the Commission has implemented or revised more than 12 standards; helped improve window covering safety pushed industry to utilize flow

restrictions on liquid nicotine packaging to improve safety and reduce risks to children; and has secured tens of millions of dollars in civil penalties.

I would like to ensure you have time this morning to address recent questioning of your motives and your leadership at the Commission. As a nurse, lawyer, mother, and grandmother, I know how important safety is to you and your career in public service.

It's apparent that some are still trying to delay and halt your confirmation in the Senate because – by law – you are required to leave the Commission in October if you have not been confirmed.

That would leave the Commission at a deadlock 2 – 2. Only increasing uncertainty. Why that would be anyone's goal with an agency as important as the CPSC is beyond me. I urge the Senate to advance your confirmation as soon as possible. I want you to know your hard work and dedication to protect Americans has not gone unnoticed. Thank you.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission, or the CPSC, was established in 1972. The Commission is charged with protecting the public against unreasonable risks of injuries and deaths associated with consumer products.

The CPSC's jurisdiction covers over 15,000 products...that are sold to and used every day our homes, schools, businesses, and elsewhere. However, the CPSC does not have jurisdiction over tobacco products, motor vehicles, aircrafts, boats, food, drugs, and the like.

The CPSC's primary functions are to: develop voluntary standards with industry or create mandatory standards where no adequate voluntary standard exists to organize recalls of dangerous products that pose a risk to people; and to investigate potentially hazardous products.

The structure of the statute is critical. It recognizes the importance of the agency having open lines of communication with the sectors of our economy that they

regulate. When something does go wrong, there are processes in place that take products off the shelves or websites as quickly as possible.

This is why Members of this Committee have been such strong supporters of the Fast Track Recall program as one example. The work you and your staff do is important. I look forward to our discussion today and thank you for being here.

I yield back.