

6/13/2019

Hearing on Dangerous Consumer Products
House Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
Congressman Mike Thompson CA-5

Chair Schakowsky, Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers and members of the Consumer Protection and Commerce Sub Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer this statement.

I met Margrett Lewis Priest, a resident of Sonoma California, more than three years ago. Her story of survival and advocacy on behalf of burn survivors has inspired H.R. 806, the Portable Fuel Container Safety Act of 2019. In June 2014, Margrett used her bare hands and body to extinguish flames from a flashback explosion, which had engulfed her child while using a portable fuel container. Margrett went on to support her daughter through more than 50 reconstructive surgeries.

Flammable or combustible liquids, like the ones used by Margrett's family, cause over 160,000 fires per year, causing \$1.5 billion in property damage, almost 4,000 injuries and 454 deaths annually. These accidents can happen in any community, and the results can be devastating. Flame Mitigation Devices (FMD), such as flame arresters, can help prevent accidents caused by flammable vapors igniting within liquid containers, causing an explosion or flash fire. While workplace safety regulations govern the use of approved flame arresters in flammable liquid containers for industrial use, there is no requirement for consumer containers used in homes, camp sites, and schools across the country.

The Portable Fuel Container Safety Act would address this gap by directing the Consumer Product Safety Commission to establish a standard for requiring FMDs to be used in these containers and reduce the risk of catastrophic accidents. This bipartisan solution is supported by a broad coalition including the American Burn Association, the Congressional Fire Services Institute, the International Association of Fire Fighters, the National Association of State Fire Marshalls, International Association of Fire Chiefs, National Volunteer Fire Council, National Fire Protection Association, Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors, and the Portable Fuel Container Manufacturers Association

I want to thank the Committee for its consideration of this extremely important issue and I strongly urge this committee to support this bill, a commonsense, bipartisan public safety solution.