

**Committee on Energy and Commerce**  
**Opening Statement**  
**of**  
**Full Committee Ranking Member Greg Walden**  
**“Keeping Kids and Consumers Safe from Dangerous Products”**  
Thursday, June 13, 2019

Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

Good morning and welcome to the first Consumer Protection and Commerce Subcommittee legislative hearing of the year. Today, we will discuss several bills – all with the same objective: improving consumer safety.

This hearing is important for two reasons:

First, the opportunity to discuss the bills under consideration and policies to improve the safety of products and keep kids and consumers safe.

And, second, the opportunity to talk directly to the public about risks and how they can make sure they are taking steps to protect themselves and their families.

I am grateful that Rep. Rodgers introduced the bill, because as we will hear again today, the fast track recall program – for good actors who just want to get information to their customers faster – has slowed down a lot in recent years and we should find a solution. I understand there is a lot of bipartisan support for this proposal and I look forward to hearing from the witnesses.

In April, we heard directly from the CPSC commissioners and a number of interested parties about ongoing product-specific issues at the agency as well as ways in which we can improve some of the agency processes.

We have heard from many stakeholders about concerns with the existing fast track recall program at the agency. It exists to – as the title of this hearing suggests – to keep kids and consumers safe – by removing potentially hazardous products from the marketplace as quickly and efficiently as possible. And it does not apply to just one or two products – it applies to all 15,000 product categories in the CPSC’s jurisdiction.

As I mentioned earlier, the fast track program has slowed greatly from unnecessary layers of bureaucracy that, in the examples we will hear today, do not add substantially to benefit consumers, and delay for weeks if not months, when consumers are told about potentially dangerous products.

If a company wants to recall a product, shouldn't we be encouraging them to work with the CPSC and not go around the agency? I think the answer is clearly, yes. This is why I appreciate the work Rep. Rodgers has put into the FASTER Act to solicit comments and ideas on how to improve this previously award-winning recall program.

This bill creates a process that removes the unnecessary red tape slowing down recalls today, and mirrors programs that are already working at the FDA and NHTSA. As I indicated earlier, we are committed to working on the bill with our colleagues across the aisle to hopefully find a good bipartisan solution to this critical issue.

I want to applaud Ms. Rodgers for this thoughtful approach and for helping advance safety and I urge all of my colleagues on this Committee to support H.R. 3169 as we move forward.

One last point, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my strong support for Acting Chair Buerkle to be confirmed by the Senate as Chair and for her new term at the CPSC. She is well positioned to lead this critical safety agency and has demonstrated her commitment to protect consumers throughout her career of public service. I urge my Senate colleagues to confirm her as soon as possible.

Thank you and I yield back.

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