

## **Additional Questions for the Record**

### **Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce Hearing on “Buyer Beware: Fake and Unsafe Products on Online Marketplaces” March 4, 2020**

**Ms. Lori Wallach, Director, Public Citizen’s Global Trade Watch, Public Citizen**

#### **The Honorable Jan Schakowsky (D-IL)**

1. Why is disclosure of the country of origin of the seller and product helpful to consumers?

Requiring the disclosure of the country of origin of the seller and product has three distinct benefits. First, by knowing the country of origin of the seller, a consumer can determine in advance whether under a specific country’s laws a seller is subject to legal responsibility for a product’s authenticity and safety. This will allow a consumer to know there will be recourse available if the product is not what was advertised or is defective or dangerous. Second, identifying the country of origin of the product helps consumers to determine if the product is what has been advertised, or whether, perhaps, it is a counterfeit. That is to say, if the product advertised is known to be made in a specific country or at least known not to be made in a specific country, having a product origin listed can warn that the product may not be authentic. Finally, providing country of origin information also allows a consumer to make informed choices based on labor and environmental practices in various countries’ manufacturing sectors and countries’ relative safety standards and inspection regimes.

2. Should third-party sellers be required to disclose their full contact information, including location and country of origin of the seller and the product?

Third-party sellers must be required to disclose their full contact information, including location and country of origin of the seller and the product. This information is essential for consumers to be able to make an informed choice in the first instance, as noted in the answer to Question 1, and also to have any opportunity to seek redress if the product is not what is advertised or it harms them.