

Bilirakis Opening Statement – Consumer Product Safety Commission FY25 Budget Hearing

Good afternoon to everyone here and welcome to today's Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Hearing for the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). I want to thank all five of the CPSC Commissioners for appearing before us today to discuss the important mission of ensuring people across the nation are protected against risks of injuries and deaths associated with consumer products.

In particular I want to thank the Chair of the Commission, Alex Hoehn-Saric, for his work in promoting safety and protection in a fair and reasonable manner – I know you are particularly familiar with this Subcommittee as well, with your background as a Chief Counsel.

I also thank the employees at the Commission who work closely with Customs and Border Protection at ports across the country, inspecting millions of consumer products for hazardous, unsafe, or counterfeit goods. This work is important in ensuring public safety, and in recent years with bad actors in China continuing to flood our nation's borders, has become extraordinarily difficult.

These consumer safety issues have consistently been a bipartisan effort for the Congress since the enactment of the Consumer Product Safety Act in 1972, and the statute has long been explicitly clear in the way that it requires the Commission to operate and work side-by-side with industry stakeholders. The existing law's model has proven incredibly successful in protecting the public against harms, while still allowing for new innovations to thrive in the marketplace.

The law mandates CPSC to defer to voluntary product safety standards when applicable and has a clear due process requirement for ensuring corrective actions are taken when problems arise. Many of these voluntary standards are created and revised on a regular basis, in close conjunction with the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) International, and I appreciate the tireless efforts that many in the industry do to ensure their products work effectively and safely for millions of consumers every day.

However, I know not everyone shares the same views that this model works the way it was designed to, and I have significant concerns about the "government-knows-best" mentality that is rampant across the Biden Administration. We started this Congress last year reading reports that CPSC Commissioner Trumka had discussed the idea of a universal ban on gas stoves in this country. The American people have made it clear to us: this type of government overreach is unacceptable. We know those in the Rush-to-Green movement would like to ban all gas powered appliances in our homes.

I'm grateful that our Committee acted quickly to denounce these ideas and moved forward with Rep. Armstrong's bill the *Gas Stove Protection and Freedom Act* and Rep. Lesko's companion bill in the *Energy Subcommittee*, to prohibit this type of regulatory approach. I'm worried that these sort of "regulate first" mandates will kill the ingenuity of the American spirit and the strongest marketplace in the globe – unfortunately, that's what this Administration has been known for. I hope that the CPSC will not fall into this thinking any longer and instead work with Congress on ways we can ensure the American people stay safe through consensus measures.

In fact, this Committee has proven on a regular basis this year that it can deliver bipartisan wins in protecting consumers, including House passage of *Setting Consumer Standards for Lithium-Ion Batteries Act*, Rep. Trahan's *Youth Poisoning Protection Act*, and Rep. Balderson's *Awning Safety Act*. In each of these pieces of legislation, we've come to agreement to put appropriate guardrails in place to protect

individuals' lives and prevent unreasonable risk of death and injury when it comes to the everyday products American consumers use.

In closing I appreciate the important work of the Commission, but similarly to my comments at our FTC hearing earlier this month, I implore the Chair to ensure that you do not erode the public's trust and instead work with us to protect consumers. I look forward to conducting this important oversight and to hearing each of the Commissioners' testimonies, and I yield back.