

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery
of
Subcommittee on Innovation, Data and Commerce Ranking Member Jan Schakowsky

***Innovation, Data, and Commerce Subcommittee Hearing on “The Fiscal Year 2025
Consumer Product Safety Commission Budget”***

July 23, 2024

I want to thank Chair Alex Hoehn-Saric and the other CPSC commissioners for being here. Consumer protection is my passion and what really first drew me to public life. The CPSC is a small but mighty agency, and I’m so glad they are helping keep us safe.

They have recently finalized rules to protect consumers from: furniture tip-over-related deaths; children ingesting button and coin cell batteries; child injuries and deaths from crib bumpers and inclined sleepers.

These rules are all based on legislation we passed through this subcommittee last Congress. I am so grateful to my colleagues and to the Commission for doing the hard work of protecting consumers.

And I have two pieces of legislation that would make the CPSC even more effective. First, the Sunshine in Product Safety Act would empower the Commission to inform the public about dangerous products whether or not companies give their permission. This bill rightly puts the safety of the American public before corporations. Second, the Consumer Advocacy and Protection, or CAP, Act, would eliminate the maximum civil penalty the CPSC can levy. Currently, the maximum penalty is only \$17.5 million. Many corporations simply treat this as the cost of doing business. That is absolutely unacceptable. My bill would hold bad corporate actors accountable and strengthen the CPSC’s enforcement ability.

These bills would strengthen the ability of the CPSC to fulfill its mission – keeping the American public safe. That is a mission everyone should agree on, which is why I was so disappointed to see further cuts to the CPSC’s budget in the Republican appropriations bill that is coming to the floor. The CPSC is already dramatically underfunded, and if enacted, this would hobble the agency even further.

Mr. Chair, I look forward to discussing the importance of robustly funding the CPSC with you. Thank you and I yield back.