

Committee on Energy and Commerce
Opening Statement
of
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce Chair Jan Schakowsky

CPC Markup on Consumer Product Safety Bills

Wednesday, July 10, 2019

Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

Good morning. As I said during our legislative hearing on these bills, I am humbled to chair this subcommittee as we mark up six bills that will save lives. Think about that for a moment. We are here to ensure that the products we have in our homes are safe. I wake up every day thinking about what we can do on this committee to ensure no more children die from tip-overs, no more babies suffocate from crib bumpers, no more children are burnt from unsafe fuel containers, families are safe from carbon monoxide poisoning in their homes, and firefighters are safe from chemicals that can exacerbate fires and cause long-term health problems.

This is a big deal. Protecting consumers is what drew me to public life.

I am the lead author of two of the bills we are marking up and a cosponsor of the rest. I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their leadership on these important pieces of legislation.

The first bill we will be marking up is the STURDY Act, which would direct CPSC to enact a mandatory standard to prevent furniture tip-overs.

Every hour, of every day, common pieces of furniture like clothing storage units, dressers, and chests tip, tilt, and fall. According to the CPSC, tip-overs inflict around 3 injuries per hour, and cause hundreds of avoidable child fatalities. Product experts and parental groups agree: tip-over injuries are preventable, but current industry standards are not enough.

In 2018 alone, over 2 million units of children's products faced recall, and nursery furniture was the leading category. In the last 10 years, however, the CPSC finalized only one mandatory safety standard. I am so appreciative of Cathy McMorris Rogers for her commitment to working with me on this.

A second bill I introduced last month with my friends from Chicago, Bobby Rush and Robin Kelly, is the Safe Cribs Act, which would ban crib bumpers. The American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) safe sleep recommendations call for infants to sleep on a firm, flat surface and does not recommend the use of crib bumpers due to risk of suffocation. CPSC, for its part, has been working on safety standards for crib bumpers since 2012, but it is not clear when, if ever, they will adopt a standard. Families need this legislation!

Finally, I want to take a moment to make a note about H.R. 3169, the FASTER Act. The bill is not being marked up this morning but was included in the legislative hearing last month. We have been working in bipartisan, good-faith discussions on the FASTER Act and will continue to do so. We are working to ensure that good faith actors do not lose confidence in the fast track recall program and consumers continue to get recall information they need as quickly as possible. I commit to continue working together on this issue moving forward.

The Chair now recognizes Ms. Rodgers, Ranking Member for the Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce, for 5 minutes for her opening statement.

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