

*** CONSUMER FEDERATION OF AMERICA * CONSUMERS UNION *
* KIDS IN DANGER * NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER FOR WOMEN
& FAMILIES * NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL * PUBLIC
CITIZEN * UNION OF CONCERNED SCIENTISTS * U.S. PUBLIC
INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP ***

March 16, 2011

Dear Senator:

We are writing to urge you to oppose Senate Amendment, SA 199 offered by Senator Paul to S. 493, “SBIR/STTR Reauthorization Act of 2011.”

SA 199 would defund the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). This amendment would have a devastating impact on children, consumers, and the industry.

CPSC’s mission, as set forth in the Consumer Product Safety Act, is to “protect the public against unreasonable risks of injury associated with consumer products.”¹ CPSC is charged with protecting the public from hazards associated with over 15,000 different consumer products. Its statutes give the Commission the authority to set safety standards, require labeling, order recalls and bans of hazardous products, collect death and injury data, inform the public about consumer product safety, and contribute to the voluntary standards setting process.

The CPSC plays an extremely critical role in protecting American consumers from product hazards found in the home, in schools and during recreation. For the past forty years, the work of CPSC has contributed to the prevention of tens of thousands of deaths due to unsafe products and has saved both consumers and companies billions of dollars in injuries and hazards averted. CPSC’s work is of great value to the American public. CPSC saves the country many times the agency’s annual budget in terms of injuries prevented and lives saved. A recent Consumers Union poll also found strong support for the CPSC and its work. The overwhelming majority of poll respondents – 98 percent – agreed that the federal government should play a prominent role in improving product safety.

Every year, an estimated 34,500 die and about 34 million people suffer injuries associated with consumer products under the CPSC’s jurisdiction. However, only recently -- due to the work of Senate Appropriators and passage of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act -- has the CPSC been able to more robustly protect consumers.

Defunding the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is an outrageous effort that would endanger every American. We urge you to oppose SA 199 because it would devastate consumer product safety in the United States and risk Americans’ lives.

¹ Consumer Product Safety Act, 15 U.S.C. 2051, section 2(b)(1).

Sincerely,

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