



March 3, 2010

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
H-218 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
H-218 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable José E. Serrano
Chair
Subcommittee on Financial Services
and General Government
B-300 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jo Ann Emerson
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Financial Services
and General Government
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Providing the Necessary Appropriations for the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to Implement the *Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA)*

Dear Mssrs. Obey, Lewis, Serrano, and Emerson:

On behalf of the American Apparel and Footwear Association- the national trade association of the apparel and footwear industries, and their suppliers- I am writing to urge Congress to fully fund the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). Such funding is needed to ensure proper consumer product safety regulation and to help the CPSC properly implement the *Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA)*.

As you know, Congress approved the CPSIA in 2008 to overhaul and strengthen the nation's product safety laws. Among other things, the CPSIA creates new regulatory restrictions, establishes a product safety database, and requires the CPSC to undertake dozens of rulemakings in a very short period of time. This past year, President Barack Obama and Congress recognized the need to grant the under-budgeted and overwhelmed agency additional funds to carry out these new legislative mandates. Cutting the agency's budget for 2011 would be a mistake as the agency must still implement critical provisions of the CPSIA like the product safety database and the drop in the lead standard from 300ppm to 100ppm and lift the stay of enforcement on certain testing and certification requirements.


Without necessary resources, CPSC staff has been strained in their ability to not only understand business supply chains, but also issue timely and comprehensive guidance and regulations that

are in accordance with current operating procedures. This has created considerable confusion, which in turn undermines the product safety system by denying companies the ability to make decisions based on predictability. More importantly, this confusion gives the public reason to question the enforcement capabilities of the CPSC under the new CPSIA.

Further, with all the resources the CPSC must now dedicate to manage the enormous workload triggered by the new CPSIA requirements, staff attention is diverted from enforcing preexisting product safety regulations. It is therefore in the interest of all stakeholders, consumers, and businesses alike, to operate under an efficient and effective regulatory agency. Given the problems this funding shortfall in triggering in the product safety regime, we urge that Congress ensure full funding of the CPSC now.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important issue. Please contact Rebecca Mond of my staff at 703-797-9038 or via email at rmond@apparelandfootwear.org if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin M. Burke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kevin M. Burke
President & CEO