



we wear® product safety

June 24, 2015

Todd A. Stevenson
Office of the Secretary
Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway
Room 820
Bethesda, MD 20814

RE: AAFA Recommendations for the Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) Budget Priorities for Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017

Dear Mr. Stevenson:

On behalf of the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA), thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Commission's budget priorities for fiscal years 2016 and 2017.

AAFA is the national trade association representing the apparel and footwear industry including its suppliers, manufacturers, retailers, and service providers. Our members produce and sell products that touch every American – clothing and shoes. Our industry accounts for more than four million U.S. employees and more than \$361 billion in retail sales each year.

For the fiscal year 2016 Operating Plan and the fiscal year 2017 Congressional Budget Request, AAFA recommends the Commission consider emphasizing and dedicating resources toward the following issues:

- **Harmonization & Mutual Recognition of Federal, State, and International Standards**
- **Greater Reliance on Cost-Benefit Analysis in Rulemaking**

Attachment A contains further information in support of our recommendations.

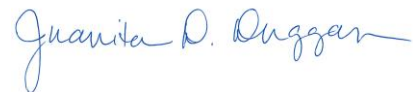
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Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter. AAFA looks forward to working with the Commission and furthering our collaborative relationship toward ensuring product safety.

Please contact Danielle Iverson at 703.797.9039 or by email at diverson@wewear.org if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,



Juanita D. Duggan
President & CEO

Attachment A

AAFA recommends that the Commission dedicate resources toward harmonizing federal, state, and international product safety standards.

State Harmonization

The drastic increase in individual U.S. state/county enforcement of product safety regulations has affected all industries. Companies find it increasingly difficult to comply with multiple reporting requirements, labeling specifications, and bans that impose additional, and often contradictory, requirements for compliance. We are only in the beginning stages of what appears to be a wave of state and local regulations that ignore and circumvent what Congress did when it enacted the CPSIA and what the CPSC has done in interpreting and implementing the CPSIA. We recommend the Commission use its authority to work with local and state legislators and regulators to ensure that all new regulations created are in sync with national regulations and that testing requirements flow from federal requirements in order to maximize consumer safety and minimize testing costs.

International Testing Harmonization & Mutual Recognition of Standards

AAFA firmly believes in the need for international testing harmonization as well as mutual recognition of testing and standards to support product compliance and certification. When testing for compliance with a particular regulation, duplicative testing is counterproductive as it does not provide any greater assurance of compliance. The Commission has spoken at great length about the goals of harmonizing international regulations, especially with Canada and Mexico. Presently, the Commission has the opportunity through the *Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP)* negotiations between the European Union and the United States to promote global harmonization and mutual recognition of standards. Other opportunities exist through

the U.S.-Canada Regulatory Cooperation Council (RCC). We strongly encourage the CPSC to continue and accelerate these efforts.

AAFA recommends that the Commission ensure greater reliance on cost-benefit analysis in rule making.

AAFA believes there needs to be a stronger emphasis on cost-benefit analysis in rulemaking. Proper cost-benefit analysis is a powerful tool to assist the agency, the regulated community, and other product safety stakeholders in focusing their energies on those rules and requirements that will have the greatest benefit for consumer safety and public health.

Among other things, proper cost-benefit analysis directs scarce resources and targeted responses toward addressing the greatest risks and hazards.

Although we understand there are some concerns about the use of cost-benefit analysis in rulemaking, specifically that it could lead to “paralysis by analysis,” we don’t believe that this tool, if properly used, leads to that result. In contrast, cost-benefit analysis imposes important process disciplines that maximize the effectiveness of the final rules by making them more easily understood by the regulated community and enforceable by the CPSC.

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