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ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515-6115

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CHAIRMAN

February 8, 2007

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The Honorable Nancy A. Nord
Acting Chairman
Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814

Dear Chairman Nord:

Last month, staff members from the Consumer Product Safety Commission ("CPSC" or "Commission") met with staff from the Committee on Energy and Commerce to brief them on the ongoing activities at the Commission. In addition to informing our staff of pending issues before the Commission, CPSC staff also highlighted two problematic issues facing the Commission.

First, CPSC currently lacks a voting quorum to promulgate new rules and regulations as a result of the continued vacancy in one of the three Commissioner slots. While we have been informed that this vacancy does not pose any immediate problems, this lack of rulemaking authority could pose long-term problems if the vacancy is not filled relatively soon.

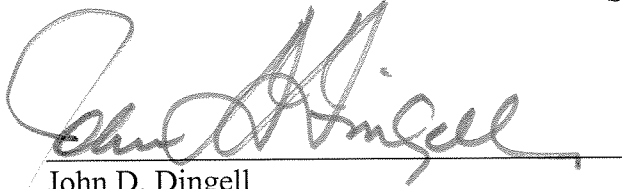
Second, we were informed that CPSC is suffering from a so-called "brain drain" that may be hindering its work. That is, many experienced staff – some of whom go back to the Commission's creation in 1973 – are now retiring and the agency is having a difficult time replacing these with experienced and proficient personnel. Moreover, given the competitive nature of the current job market, the Commission is not only generally experiencing significant turnover, but also is having difficulty recruiting and retaining new talent. Please advise us of the scope of this problem, what steps are being taken to address it, and whether any Congressional action would be of assistance.

As Chairmen respectively of the Committee on Energy and Commerce and of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection, we want to inform you that we are now aware of these two issues and wish to be as helpful as possible. We fully support the role CPSC plays in protecting the American public and will endeavor to work in a bipartisan manner to empower the Commission to fulfill its mission.

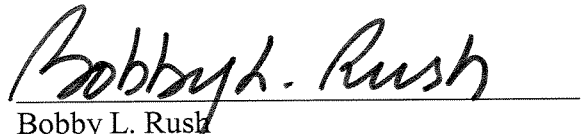
The Honorable Nancy A. Nord
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Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact us, or have your staff contact Consuela Washington on the Committee staff at (202) 225-2927.

Sincerely,



John D. Dingell
Chairman



Bobby L. Rush
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade,
And Consumer Protection

cc: The Honorable Joe Barton, Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Cliff Stearns, Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce