

**Consumers Union*Consumer Federation of America*Kids in
Danger*Union of Concerned Scientists*U.S. PIRG***

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**Consumer Groups Applaud Senate Commerce Committee
Passage of Comprehensive Product Safety Bill
*CPSC will be strengthened; Consumers will be better protected from
Unsafe Products***

Washington, DC—Consumer Federation of America, Consumers Union, Kids in Danger, Union of Concerned Scientists and the U.S. Public Interest Research Group applaud the Senate Commerce Committee for passing S. 2045, the CPSC Reform Act of 2007. This bill would give the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), the agency responsible for ensuring the safety of over 15,000 products, greater authority and resources to protect the public from unsafe products.

“This bill is the most comprehensive and consumer protective product safety legislation that has emerged from the Senate Commerce Committee in decades,” stated Rachel Weintraub, Director of Product Safety for Consumer Federation of America. “We applaud the Senate Commerce Committee for choosing safety over special interests.”

“Today’s unanimous Committee vote should send a clear message that safety won’t be put on the back burner anymore. This is a big step in fixing an under-funded and broken agency. By giving the CPSC more tools and resources to protect our children and families from dangerous products, it addresses a very real and urgent need,” said Donald Mays, Senior Director, Product Safety Planning and Technical Administration.

“For too long, CPSC’s been the little agency that couldn’t,” said Ed Mierzwinski U.S. PIRG Consumer Program Director. “The Senate Commerce Committee today gave the agency some of the tools it needs to protect all Americans, especially children, from dangerous imports and other hazards,” added Mierzwinski.

“For the first time since Danny’s death, we feel that the Senate is making real progress towards protecting children from unsafe products,” stated Nancy Cowles, Executive Director of Kids in Danger.

Consumer groups have been working to ensure that the bill would be as protective of consumers as possible. The bill passed out of the Senate Commerce Committee today with many strengthening amendments supported by the groups including, Internet and catalogue warning labels; product registration cards to improve how consumers find out about recalls, making toy safety standards mandatory, and improving whistleblower protections.

“Whistleblower protections and a more active Inspector General should send a strong signal to CPSC managers not to distort the findings of agency staff or suppress their findings used to protect the public's safety,” said Francesca Grifo, director of the UCS Scientific Integrity Program.

The CPSC Reform Act of 2007, introduced by Senator Mark Pryor (D-Ark.), and co-sponsored by Senators Brown, Durbin, Klobuchar and Bill Nelson would require some children’s products, including toys to be tested by independent labs and to be certified to meet safety standards, make it illegal to sell a recalled products, limit the levels of lead in toys and children’s jewelry to low levels, improve CPSC’s ability to disclose safety information to the public, and raise the cap on the agency’s penalties from \$1.83 million to \$100 million. It also includes provisions giving State Attorneys General the ability to enforce CPSC regulations and includes protections for individuals in companies and safety agencies who blow the whistle on wrongdoing.

The groups applaud the leadership and extraordinary effort of Senators Inouye Pryor, Bill Nelson, Klobuchar, Boxer, McCaskill, Dorgan, Kerry, Snowe and Cantwell for working to strengthen the provisions of S. 2045 and improve the ability of CPSC to protect the public from unsafe products.

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Consumer Federation of America (<http://www.consumerfed.org>) is a nonprofit association of 300 consumer groups and, a combined membership of more than 50 million people dedicated to advancing the consumers’ interest through advocacy and education. *Consumer’s Union* (<http://www.consumersunion.org>) is an independent, nonprofit organization based in New York which publishes Consumer Reports. *U.S. PIRG* (<http://www.uspirg.org>) is the Boston-based federation of state Public Interest Research Groups.