

March 26, 2014

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

Dear Secretary Stevenson,

We respectfully submit the following comments to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC or the Commission), regarding the proposed extension of approval of a collection of information from persons who may voluntarily register and participate in consumer focus groups, under Office of Management and Budget Control No. 3041-0136. 79 Fed. Reg. 8177 (February 11, 2014). We appreciate the opportunity to provide our perspective on the proposed extension, and we ask you to consider our comments carefully as you craft your request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

RILA promotes consumer choice and economic freedom through public policy and industry operational excellence. Our members include the largest and fastest growing companies in the retail industry – retailers, product manufacturers, and service providers – which together account for more than \$1.5 trillion in annual sales. RILA members provide millions of jobs and operate more than 100,000 stores, manufacturing facilities, and distribution centers domestically and abroad.

RILA members appreciate the Commission's continuous dedication and efforts to improve the safety of consumer products, quickly remove unsafe products from the market, and engage and educate consumers on product safety issues. We share the CPSC's goal of ensuring the safety of all consumer products sold to U.S. consumers and the effective communication of product recalls.

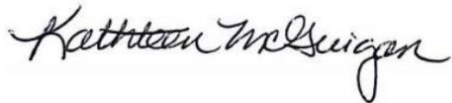
RILA members, however, have concerns with the CPSC's use of the proposed focus groups to study issues related to recall effectiveness. While RILA supports the efforts of the Commission to better understand products and consumer behavior, our concern rests on the premise that the limited number and composition of these groups would limit the scope of information gathered. The proposal calls for 20 focus groups over a three-year period. Comprised of 10 persons each, these groups – in addition to the 10 one-on-one interviews that will be conducted – would not provide the Commission with the adequate data necessary to carry out a robust study of this topic.

In 2003, the CPSC conducted an initial review of consumer recall communications and recall effectiveness rates.¹ The study reviewed message content, clarity and comprehension focusing on best practices to ensure message retention.² The study noted numerous reasons why consumers may choose not to act upon the remedy offered in a product recall, including minimal cost of the product, negative impact of time and inconvenience, task overload, social influence and consumers' risk tolerance and perceived need for the product.³ Unfortunately, to date, the CPSC has not followed up on this study to examine the effectiveness of the various methods of communicating recalls to consumers to break through these barriers.

RILA members share the CPSC's commitment to ensuring the safety of all consumer products sold in the U.S. market. We support the Commission's goal of gaining a better understanding of consumer behavior and the effectiveness of recall messages. Our brief comments are intended to inform the CPSC of the concerns regarding the CPSC's proposed use of focus groups to gain information on issues related to recall effectiveness. Instead, we suggest that the CPSC conduct a robust study and review of the effectiveness of various methods of consumer notification. Working collaboratively with industry, including retailers, as well as consumers, RILA proposes that the CPSC undertake such research in order to develop a better understanding of how to effectively communicate recall messages to consumers. RILA members would welcome the opportunity to work with the Commission on such an endeavor.

We appreciate your consideration of our comments and look forward to our continued partnership. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Sincerely,



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¹ *Recall Effectiveness Research: A Review and Summary of the Literature on Consumer Motivation and Behavior*, CPSC Order No CPSC-F-02-1391, Contract No. GS23F9780H (July 2003).

² *Id.* at 13-16.

³ *Id.* at 22-27.