



TESTIMONY OF
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PRESIDENT

THE TOY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (TIA)

SUBMITTED TO
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Good morning Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee.

I am very pleased to come before the Subcommittee this morning on behalf of the Toy Industry Association to talk about toy safety.

The TIA is the leading toy industry association in the world. Our 500 member companies provide more than 85% of all toys sold in the United States each year. TIA has been a leader in developing and implementing toy safety measures for more than seven decades. We are very proud of our accomplishments in assuring that the toys sold in America are the safest of any in the world. Our toy safety standards have been the model for other nations, and records show that toy related injuries in the U.S. are relatively rare, despite the sale of nearly three billion new toys every year.

The recent recalls of a few models of toy products in the U.S., however, have given our industry an opportunity to make further progress in the continuous process of safety improvement. These recalls demonstrated to us that we needed to apply some new safety assurance measures in the toy production process.

It is important to point out that we that the recalls account for a tiny portion of the total of nearly three billion toys sold in the U.S. each year. So far this year there have been lead paint related recalls of 14 models of toy products imported into the U.S. by 11 companies. Two of those companies are among our 500 manufacturing members. And it should also be remembered that, to their credit, these recalls were initiated by the manufacturers themselves when they identified the problem.

But because the recalls this year related to lead paint on toys, something which has been prohibited by our safety standards for decades, we believe it is important for us to strengthen new measures to prevent such occurrences in the future. Here are the fundamentals of the new initiatives that we are undertaking:

- **First**, we are developing standardized procedures that will be used industry-wide to verify that products comply with U.S. safety standards;
- **Second**, we are establishing criteria to certify that testing laboratories are qualified to perform testing to U.S. standards using industry-wide protocols; and
- **Third**, we are encouraging the federal government to adopt a requirement that all toys sold in the U.S. undergo inspection to assure that they conform to our standards.

We have modeled our initiatives in this area after the measures utilized in many American industries. We are working with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) to develop these procedures, and we are communicating closely with the Consumer Product Safety Commission throughout this process.

The safety system in the United States is a characteristically American approach to solving problems and meeting needs. It is a robust, pluralistic system that employs the talents, expertise, and speed of the consensus process -- working together with industry, government and consumers -- to address safety issues. We are very proud to be working with ANSI in developing these new measures. ANSI is the premier non-profit organization whose mission is to enhance the American quality of life by promoting, facilitating and safeguarding the integrity of consensus-driven safety standards and conformity assessment systems in the U.S.

In contrast to a top-down, government driven approach to safety, our system involves all stakeholders in a consensus-process that allows tens of thousands of new products and new technology to come to market for the enjoyment of our consumers. Clearly, there is an important role for government to play as a watchdog and an

enforcer of conformance with private sector standards, but history has proven the success of our reliance upon private sector safety initiatives.

Finally, I would like to point out that our proposals are not specific to toys made in any particular area of the world. The new requirements will apply to toys made in any nation. For more than thirty years, working with our trusted suppliers in China, our industry has produced billions of high quality toys that fully conform to our toy safety standards. We are confident that our suppliers in China will embrace these new safety requirements.

We enthusiastically applaud the new safety agreements signed last week between the U.S. CPSC and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine in China. And we welcome the agreement by the Chinese authorities to take immediate action to eliminate the use of lead paint on Chinese manufactured toys exported to the United States. We recognize and accept, however, that the ultimate responsibility resides with our industry to assure that toys imported into the U.S. conform to our safety standards. We do not shrink from this responsibility, and we pledge to you and to the American public that we will do

everything in our power to make sure that toys sold in America are safe for our children to play with.

I am honored to be here representing the toy industry among my distinguished colleagues on this panel, and I look forward to responding to your questions.