

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 19, 2007

Mr. R. David Paulison
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Department of Homeland Security
500 C St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Director Paulison,

We are writing to you regarding the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) decision to sell travel trailers to the general public through auctions sponsored by the General Services Administration (GSA).

As you know, media reports have indicated that travel trailer occupants have reported nosebleeds, sinus infections, asthma attacks, and other respiratory related illnesses. Tests conducted in 2006 found that the formaldehyde levels in most of the trailers tested exceeded the Environmental Protection Agency's recommended limit. While we understand that formaldehyde is commonly used in the fabricated wood and particle board in travel trailers, it should be noted that the International Agency for Research on Cancer classifies formaldehyde as a carcinogen.

Therefore, we would like to know whether FEMA has instructed GSA to issue appropriate disclaimers to potential buyers informing them that past occupants expressed adverse health affects potentially associated with their occupancy in these trailers. Although we are aware that FEMA has tested these claims, it is our understanding that the agency did urge occupants of the trailers to take certain precautionary steps to reduce the risk of exposure, such as assuring appropriate ventilation and employing measures to reduce humidity.

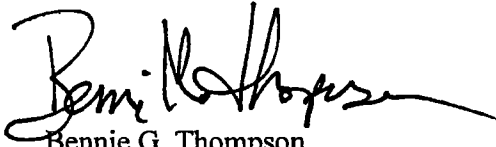
Thus, as these trailers enter the stream of commerce, we are concerned that potential buyers should have the necessary information which will enable them to make responsible decisions. Therefore, we would appreciate your response to the following questions:

- 1) Has FEMA taken any actions to inform potential buyers of the adverse health consequences reported by trailer occupants?
- 2) What future actions will FEMA take to ensure that potential buyers of trailers are fully informed of past allegations and the associated health risks?

Pursuant to Rule X (3)(g) and Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, we request a response in writing no later than May 18, 2007. Should you have any questions, please contact Cherri Branson, Chief Oversight Counsel, Committee on Homeland Security, at (202) 226-2616. Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.

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Sincerely,



Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman
House Committee on Homeland
Security



Henry A. Waxman
Chairman
House Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform

BGT/rdh