



U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
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May 26, 2010

**STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN INEZ M. TENENBAUM ON THE COMMISSION
DECISION REGARDING THE FINAL RULE ON THE MANDATORY SAFETY
STANDARD FOR INFANT WALKERS**

The vote of the Commission today establishing a mandatory standard for infant walkers is another important step forward in the Commission's efforts to better ensure the safety of nursery products. Section 104 of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (CPSIA) requires the Commission to evaluate voluntary consumer product safety standards for certain durable infant and toddler products. We are to make mandatory only those standards that provide children with a sufficient level of protection. If the voluntary standards are inadequate, we must improve them in order to ensure that all mandatory durable nursery product safety standards "provide the highest level of safety for such products that is feasible."

Although injuries from walkers generally have decreased over time, during the period of 2004 to 2008, infant walkers were associated with eight fatalities, as well as approximately 3000 injuries annually to children under fifteen months of age. For the mandatory standard approved today, the Commission considered the ASTM F977-07 standard. For the final rule, this standard has been improved by recommendations made by Commission staff and informed by the comments we received in response to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking we issued in September of 2009. Because the mandatory standard approved today will govern the safety of infant walkers going forward, CPSC also has voted to withdraw the existing mandatory standard governing infant walkers, baby-bouncers, and walker-jumpers only as it relates to infant walkers. The withdrawal will be effective upon the effective date of the new mandatory standard.

The safety of children is of the highest importance to me and to the Commission, and CPSC continues the rigorous safety review of durable nursery product standards. In addition to the twelve specific infant and toddler products mandated for our review by Congress in the CPSIA, we will evaluate additional nursery product voluntary standards to ensure that they also are sufficiently protective of our nation's most vulnerable consumers. Further, we have identified additional products, such as bedside sleepers, infant slings, and baby hammocks that currently lack a voluntary standard and should be considered for product safety standards due to the potential risk of injury associated with their use. Accordingly, Commission staff is working with ASTM, urging them to create strong voluntary standards for these products as the basis for our consideration for future mandatory standards.

Our experiences developing these rules have taught us that the more robust and protective a standard adopted by the voluntary standard body, the easier it is for CPSC to create an appropriate and

effective mandatory standard. One such example is the ASTM crib standard. At my direction, as part of the section 104 standards review, Commission staff has worked diligently and cooperatively with ASTM as it developed a revised crib standard. The commitment CPSC's technical representatives on the committee have shown to working with ASTM on this issue has led to the creation of a standard designed to protect children from known and emerging crib-related hazards such as with dropsides, insufficient slat strength, and wear over time. ASTM ultimately has crafted a standard that I believe will markedly reduce these potential risks to children. I commend the Commission staff for their work, and I look forward to ASTM's continued dedication and cooperation with us as we develop future durable nursery product standards.