



UNITED STATES
CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
4330 EAST WEST HIGHWAY
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COMMISSIONER RICH TRUMKA JR.

**ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SELLING DEFECTIVE SPACE HEATERS THAT
KILLED A 90-YEAR-OLD MAN REQUIRES CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION
OF VORNADO AND ITS OFFICIALS**

JULY 7, 2022

Today's \$7.5 million fine is a meaningful step in holding Vornado fully accountable for knowingly selling defective space heaters that caught on fire, one burning a 90-year-old man to his death. The evidence collected by CPSC staff indicates that Vornado knew just how dangerous their product was in 2014 and chose to hide it from the public and from CPSC. I support today's civil penalty with the understanding that we are a new Commission with new priorities. The work to get to today's \$7.5 million penalty began years ago, following the guidance of past Commissioners. But going forward, no company that behaves as Vornado has should expect to get away with a \$7.5 million fine. As a new Commission, we must seek penalties that are high enough to deter bad actors in the first place and we will reject penalties that can be written off as a cost of business. I expect that our penalties will be multiples higher than they have been in the past. We are wiping the slate clean and writing the next chapter in CPSC's work to keep companies from hiding dangerous products in our homes.

Real accountability, though, must include a criminal investigation of Vornado and its company officials. Public records show that Vornado's leadership at the time included CEO Randy Brillhart, CFO Kay Reed, and CDO Drew Jones. A dead man deserves justice. If it's proven that they knew about the defect and chose to hide safety information from CPSC, that is a crime for which they deserve to be punished to the full extent of the law. I call on the Department of Justice to criminally investigate Vornado and its responsible officials.