



U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
4330 EAST WEST HIGHWAY
BETHESDA, MD 20814

April 15, 2010

**STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN INEZ M. TENENBAUM ON THE COMMISSION
DECISION REGARDING THE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING ON THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF A PUBLIC AVAILABLE CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY
INFORMATION DATABASE**

The vote of the Commission today on the public database is a major step forward in our Open Government Project and a significant part of the progress we are making to bring the agency fully into the 21st Century. Section 212 of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act requires the Commission to establish and maintain a publicly available, searchable, and Internet accessible website on the safety of consumer products and substances under our jurisdiction. In less than one year, consumers, government officials, health care professionals and others will be able to report harmful products to the agency in a way that is accessible to the public. The database will contribute to a new generation of educated consumers and will help CPSC and manufactures react faster as incident data reports come in through SaferProducts.gov.

SaferProducts.gov, the website under development, is the next big step in our CPSC 2.0 modernization initiative and will allow consumers to 1) report incidents of harm to the agency; 2) search for reports on similar products they have purchased or seek to purchase; and 3) obtain timely information on product recalls, emerging hazards, and seasonal safety hazards. Some have sought to restrict our information sources and unnecessarily narrow the scope of information available to the public. I am committed, however, to having CPSC release as much incident data as possible to the public. In addition, because the free flow of information will empower the agency, consumers, and the public with comprehensive information about the products they buy, the database will be designed to allow us to gather the most information we can from the broadest array of those willing to share their knowledge and experiences with us. They are our partners in this effort.

I recognize the concerns and challenges that have been raised by manufacturers, especially relating to the potential for erroneous information. Congress having already heard these issues, however, struck a balance between concerns about erroneous information and the free flow of critical safety information by allowing manufacturers' responses to be posted directly with reports of harm. Further, Congress also prescribed that manufacturers may request that CPSC correct or remove information that is untrue, and the agency will do so.

What we have approved today, a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, represents a major milestone in our effort. The public notice period that today's vote will trigger is another step in soliciting comments that started with a Commission hearing last November, which was followed by a two-day

workshop in January of this year, a public briefing last week, and a decisional hearing today. We look forward to the continued engagement of manufacturers, consumers, and all other stakeholders so that we can benefit from their comments as we work towards a final rule and the implementation of this groundbreaking and critically important public safety resource.