

NOVEMBER 25, 2003

SCHAKOWSKY TO CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN:

***BEFORE HOLIDAY SHOPPING SEASON BEGINS,
WARN PARENTS ABOUT RISK OF STRANGULATION
BY YO-YO BALLS & CALL ON RETAILERS TO
VOLUNTARILY STOP SELLING THE DANGEROUS TOY***

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today called on the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to take additional steps to warn parents about the dangers of yo-yo balls and the strangulation risk the toy poses to children. According to the nonprofit group WATCH, or World Against Toys Causing Harm, yo-yo ball was named as the number one toy for parents to watch.

Schakowsky, who has called for a ban on the sale of yo-yo balls, wrote in a third letter to the CPSC Chairman Hal Stratton, *"While I am disappointed that you have decided not to institute a ban or recall of the children's toy known as a yo-yo ball at this time, I do believe, however, that you have the statutory authority and responsibility to take additional steps to ensure that parents are aware of the dangers this toy poses to their children. As the holiday season approaches, I am sure you share my concerns that many parents are still unaware that this toy poses a potential risk of strangulation."*

Schakowsky urged the Chairman *"to call on retailers to take yo-yo balls off their shelves voluntarily before the holiday shopping season gets underway."*

She continued,

"Toys R Us, Walgreens, and Wal-Mart have already chosen on their own to stop selling yo-yo balls. Your actions would send a strong message to other retailers about the dangers of this toy."

Schakowsky, who had called on the CPSC in September to recall the toy and to immediately warn parents about the toy, added in this letter, *"because I believe that the earlier press release issued by CPSC was insufficient, I ask that you immediately issue a second stronger national warning so that more parents learn about the risk yo-yo balls pose to children. Since CPSC has investigated yo-yo balls and found them to pose a risk of strangulation, especially to unsupervised children, I believe that the Commission must work proactively to ensure that this warning reaches parents and caregivers all over the country."*

Finally, Schakowsky, who is the ranking Democrat on the Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection Subcommittee, requested the release of *"CPSC's in-depth investigation of yo-yo balls, as well as any other materials that may be useful in*

justifying the Commission's decision not to ban or recall the product and the total number of complaints to date received by the Commission from consumers about yo-yo balls."