

FEBRUARY 19, 2003

**SCHAKOWSKY CONTINUES DRIVE  
FOR SAFER CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS**

**TOP DEMOCRAT ON CONSUMER PROTECTION SUBCOMMITTEE  
ANNOUNCES COMPREHENSIVE LEGISLATION TO SET NATIONAL  
TESTING AND SAFETY STANDARDS FOR DURABLE INFANT AND TODDLER  
PRODUCTS**

CHICAGO, IL -, U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) announced her plans to reintroduce the Infant and Toddler Durable Product Safety Act requiring children's products receive a federal seal of approval before they are sold. The seal would demonstrate that products, such as cradles, gates or playpens, have been independently tested and have met minimum national safety standards set by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

"Parents often walk into a large children's store to buy a swing, a bassinet, a playpen or a booster chair believing that if it's on the shelf, it must be safe. Unfortunately, that is not always the case. The sad truth is sixty-five children die each year from lethal nursery products and almost 70,000 children under the age of 5 were treated in emergency rooms in 2001 for injuries associated with nursery products," said Schakowsky during a news conference organized by Kids In Danger to release *A Minefield of Danger: Children's Product Recalls in 2002*. The report found 90 out of the 210 products recalled by the CPSC in 2002 were related to children.

Under current law, manufacturers set individual safety standards for their products, and the CPSC relies on the industry to police itself and to voluntarily comply and recall its defective products. Full-and-half-size cribs, rattles, and bottles are the only infant and toddler products that have required safety standards.

"Companies wait for hundreds of complaints to be filed and after children have been injured or even killed before they announce a recall. And millions of products that were recalled over the years can still be found in nurseries and childcare centers, and are sold and resold in garage sales and secondhand stores to unsuspecting parents and grandparents. That is unacceptable," Schakowsky said.

"The industry has been calling the shot for too long and has been using children as test subjects and guinea pigs for their products. This must stop. Dangerous products should never make it into nurseries, child care centers, or anyone's home in the first place. That is why I will continue to work the Kids In Danger and concerned parents and advocates across the country to pass the Infant and Toddler Durable Products Safety Act," Schakowsky said.

Schakowsky, a national leader for consumer safety, was recently named top Democrat on the Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection Subcommittee. The Consumer Product Safety Commission falls under the jurisdiction of Schakowsky's Subcommittee.

**INFANT AND TODDLER DURABLE PRODUCT SAFETY ACT  
BY U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JAN SCHAKOWSKY, RANKING DEMOCRAT  
HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION**

**Problem: No national minimum safety standards for infant and toddler durable products**

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) issues safety standards and requirements for various consumer products. Yet, the CPSC lacks authority in many instances. Most of the standards it produces are voluntary and the CPSC does not often have the power to recall products.

Often, the onus is on manufacturers to make sure products are safe. This is true for infant and toddler products that are designed to protect and carry babies. In fact, full-and-half-size cribs, rattles, and bottles are the only infant and toddler products that have required safety standards.

**Solution: The Infant and Toddler Durable Product Safety Act**

The bill would require all infant and toddler durable products be tested and certified according to specific safety standards before they can be put on the market. Specifically, the bill would:

1. require the CPSC to develop safety standards for each durable infant and toddler product by December 31, 2006. The products include full-and nonfull-size cribs, toddler beds, car seat, high chairs, booster chairs, hook-on chairs, bath seats, gates, play yards, stationary activity centers, child carriers, strollers, walkers, swings, bassinets, and cradles.
2. require that testing and certification for the durable products be performed by an independent third party.  
□ □
3. require the CPSC to establish an Infant and Toddler Product Review Panel to advise the Commission regarding existing guidelines, to promulgate new standards, and to create a seal to be used to show that the product is safe and has been certified. The panel would consist of representatives from the juvenile product manufacturers industry, consumer groups, and independent child product engineers and experts, as well as CPSC engineers.
4. amend the Consumer Product Safety Act by eliminating the \$1.65 million cap that manufacturers are fined for failing to report faulty products to the CPSC and by removing

**the ability of manufacturers to have editorial control over CSPC press releases.**