

Good Government Coalition and Consumer Groups **Support Whistleblower Rights on S. 2663**

February 26, 2008

Dear Senator,

This letter is to express our support for the Commerce Committee's leadership in including "best practices" whistleblower protections in S. 2663, legislation to strengthen the Consumer Product Safety Commission. This is vitally needed legislation to protect America's families, and whistleblower protection is a necessary enforcement cornerstone for the promise of reform to be reflected in reality.

The whistleblower provision in S. 2663 applied equivalent witness protection rights for those defending America against unsafe products to those Congress already approved unanimously last year in the 9/11 law for individuals who challenge public safety threats in the ground transportation industries. The Congress also adopted similar rights in the defense authorization law for those challenging corruption by defense contractors. Those are incredibly valuable reforms, but there is little doubt that threats from unsafe toys, household appliances, tools and other products pose a real threat to our families every day. In order for this reform to work most effectively, employees need to know they will be protected for reporting unsafe practices by their employers.

By using the freedom to warn, whistleblowers serve the public by preventing avoidable tragedies. There is no excuse for silence enforced by fear. Such a climate sustains risks of injury to our families when we buy birthday presents, baby blankets and linens, child seats, kitchen appliances, or any other products in retail commerce. Whistleblowers are the best possible resource for early detection, if they can safely act.

This is an enforcement clause worth continued bi-partisan support. In fact, nearly every Senator has supported analogous anti-retaliation provisions in every relevant, recorded vote since passage of the 2002 Sarbanes Oxley law. America needs genuine whistleblower protection *even more* for product safety, which is a real and present everyday concern for all Americans. Those who defend the public must have a fighting chance to defend themselves.

We urge you to support final passage of this legislation, which includes protections for the employees who protect our families.

Sincerely,

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Government Accountability Project

David Arkush, Congress Watch
Public Citizen

Ed Mierzwinski, Consumer Program Director
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