



IMPROVING
CHILDREN'S
PRODUCT
SAFETY



June 28, 2017

The Honorable Anne Marie Buerkle
Acting Chairman
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814

Dear Chairman Buerkle,

It has been a year since the recall of 29 million IKEA dressers was announced by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). We had called for the recall, rather than the awareness campaign the company and CPSC had announced the year before, due to the serious risk of harm that these unstable dressers posed to consumers.

While we applauded last year's recall of the MALM and other IKEA dressers after six deaths (a seventh death was announced after the recall), we have been repeatedly dismayed by the lack of preparation for the recall and the lack of action to encourage consumer participation with the recall. It quickly became apparent after last year's June 28 recall that IKEA had not adequately prepared for the recall – news reports of long waits, unresponsive store employees, and no response to consumer inquiries came quickly – and continue. At least as recently as January 2017, twitter posts of unresolved recall issues were still appearing. Many of those consumers will probably not reengage to participate in the recall – especially with a decline in messaging from IKEA on the recall – leaving dangerous tipping dressers unsecured in homes across the country.

IKEA quickly moved on to simply sharing their "Secure It" message with consumers without highlighting the recalled products. Recently MALM dressers and other recalled unit names returned to IKEA stores and are available for sale again – adding more confusion to the recall.

The process has not been transparent. IKEA has withheld information about how effective the recall has been. The most recent data we have access to is from January 2017 and may only go through the end of 2016. But given that most recalls have larger responses soon after the recall announcement, it is unlikely that these response rates are significantly higher:

- 175,000 refunds were provided to consumers,
- 268,000 consumers received anchoring straps since the recall. And
- an additional 439,000 straps were sent out by IKEA prior to the recall, based on the July 2015 announcement by CPSC and IKEA of the deaths.

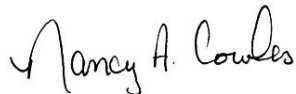
We have limited access to information that would identify weaknesses in the recall internally – we only know what we see (or don't see) on social media, in stores and in the media. Section 6(b) of the Consumer Product Safety Act limits access to information about the CPSC's interactions with companies, thus, we cannot know what discussions took place to develop the corrective action plan for this recall. We do not know if IKEA complied with the corrective action plan (CAP) and it was simply inadequate or if they have not complied.

We urge IKEA to put more resources and effort into retrieving the additional 28 million dressers involved in the recall. We ask the CPSC to review the corrective action plan to assure compliance, amend the CAP if inadequate, and work with IKEA to reach more consumers. These unsecured dressers are ticking time bombs in our children's bedrooms and homes. Rather than move on with new versions of the tainted MALM name and sweep the recall under the rug, IKEA must do everything it can to retrieve its faulty dressers.

We know you share our concern about the dangers of millions of IKEA dressers remaining in homes, many of them unsecured and posing serious risks to consumers, and we look forward to hearing from you about the CPSC's action to increase the effectiveness of this particular recall even as we meet next month to talk about the issue broadly.

We spoke with Janet McGee, mother of Ted who died last Valentine's day and whose death led to the recall. She joins us in calling for more action, saying, "Every day that goes by, children are in grave danger when an unanchored dresser lurks inside their seemingly safe bedroom."

Sincerely,



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