

Kids in Danger · Consumer Federation of America Public Citizen · Consumer Reports

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Consumer groups applaud U.S. House for passing consumer safety legislation on a bipartisan basis

Bills protect consumers and families from potentially hazardous products

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A coalition of consumer groups praised the U.S. House of Representatives for passing three measures that will help keep consumers safe.

The bills passed by voice vote with bipartisan support. The legislation that passed includes:

- **The STURDY Act (H.R. 2211)**, sponsored by Rep. Schakowsky, would direct the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to create a mandatory clothing storage unit standard to help prevent furniture tip-overs, which have caused child injuries and deaths. This critically important bill would establish a strong mandatory standard for furniture stability.
- **The Nicholas and Zachary Burt Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act of 2019 (H.R. 1618)** would establish a grant program, administered by the CPSC, that would encourage states to require the installation of residential carbon monoxide detectors, including for vulnerable populations. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), between 2010 and 2015, 2,244 individuals died from unintentional carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, with 393 deaths alone in 2015. The bill is sponsored by Rep. Ann Kuster (NH).
- **The Portable Fuel Container Safety Act of 2019 (H.R. 806)**, sponsored by Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA), would help prevent flame-jetting incidents through establishing a binding and enforceable standard that would require flame mitigation devices, or flame arrestors, on portable fuel containers. According to National Fire Protection Association estimates, fire departments responded to an average of 160,910 fires per year between 2007 and 2011 that started with ignition of a flammable or combustible liquid, resulting in an estimated 454 civilian deaths.

These bills offer a vital opportunity to protect families from preventable injuries and deaths. Consumer, safety and health care organizations all agree that a baby sleeps safest alone, on their back in a bare crib that meets current safety standards. In addition, efforts have been ongoing to

work to strengthen the voluntary industry standard addressing furniture tip-overs, with little progress, rendering passage of the STURDY Act timely and necessary.

“We applaud the U.S. House of Representatives for voting to put children and consumer safety first today. Children will be safer because the STURDY Act will require strong standards to prevent furniture tip-overs and the tragedies tip-overs case,” stated Rachel Weintraub, Legislative Director and General Counsel of Consumer Federation of America. “Passage of the Nicholas and Zachary Burt Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act and the Portable Fuel Container Safety Act are significant and will provide carbon monoxide alarms to consumers who need them and will strengthen the standard for portable fuel devices by requiring devices that will address ignition of flammable liquid.”

“Furniture tip-overs kill one child every 11 days and send two to the emergency room every hour. With the passage of this bill, we are one step closer to protecting children from these risky products,” stated Nancy Cowles, Executive Director of Kids In Danger (KID).”

“How refreshing to see the House of Representatives work in bipartisan fashion to protect consumers and their families,” said Remington A. Gregg, Counsel for Civil Justice and Consumer Rights at Public Citizen. “But a bill can only become law when both chambers pass it, and we call on the U.S. Senate to follow the House’s example and pass these critical pieces of consumer safety legislation.”

“No child should be put at risk from unstable furniture, and there’s no easy way to simply look at a dresser and tell whether it’s likely to tip over, so it’s critical to put a strong standard in place that consumers can trust,” said William Wallace, Manager of Home and Safety Policy for Consumer Reports. “We commend House members for passing the STURDY Act, and for taking action to help protect consumers from carbon monoxide poisoning and portable fuel container fires.”

We applaud the sponsors of these bills, Representatives Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Tony Cárdenas (D-CA), Ann Kuster (D-NH), and Mike Thompson (D-CA) for their leadership in protecting consumers from product safety hazards. We urge the Senate to quickly take up the House-passed bills or their Senate companion bills, in order to protect children and all consumers from these preventable product safety hazards. If the Senate passes the same version of the bills, they would proceed to the President for his signature.

The groups also support two additional bills that have not yet come to the House floor for a vote. These will protect our most vulnerable consumers – sleeping infants.

- **The Safe Sleep for Babies Act of 2019** ([H.R. 3172](#)), sponsored by Rep. Tony Cárdenas (CA), would ban infant inclined sleep products, such as the recently recalled Fisher-Price Rock ‘n Play Sleeper, which have been linked to the deaths of at least 50 infants.
- **The Safe Cribs Act of 2019** ([H.R. 3170](#)) would ban padded crib bumper pads. Bumper pads have led to dozens of infant suffocation deaths and do not offer protection to babies. These products are also inconsistent with expert safe sleep recommendations.