

BILL NELSON
FLORIDA

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

April 7, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. President,

Pursuant to my recent telephone conversation with your White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel, I'm writing about my concerns with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

I believe we have a serious problem with the CPSC. More specifically, the agency is doing too little, too late to help residents of Florida and other states who are reporting serious health and safety problems associated with living in homes built with tainted drywall imported from China.

The potential scope of this problem is huge. According to the Port Import Export Reporting Service, enough drywall was imported into ports around the country from 2004 through 2008 to build tens of thousands of homes.

The CPSC has the power to ban future imports or issue a recall on defective or hazardous products. But the commission hasn't taken any action.

And this is not the first time the commission has failed to act quickly to protect consumers from dangerous products. When confronted with the issue of Chinese-made toys found to contain extreme levels of lead, it took far too long to act.

For the past three years, the commission has been under the leadership and direction of acting Chairwoman Nancy Nord, who has come under bipartisan criticism for, among other things, being too cozy with manufacturers. Given her record, it's my belief new leadership is required.

Mr. President, I'm asking you to call on Ms. Nord to resign. I believe that the CPSC needs leaders who will stand up and protect the rights of consumers. It is my hope that you will take action to remove her from office for "neglect of duty" pursuant to Section 4(a) of the Consumer Product Safety Act, as amended (15 U.S.C. 2053 (a)), prior to the expiration of her term in 2012.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bill Nelson