

**AAP Headquarters**

141 Northwest Point Blvd  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098  
Phone: 847/434-4000  
Fax: 847/434-8000  
E-mail: kidsdocs@aap.org  
www.aap.org

**Reply to****Department of Federal Affairs**

Homer Building, Suite 400 N  
601 13th St NW  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: 202/347-8600  
Fax: 202/393-6137  
E-mail: kids1st@aap.org

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April 25, 2007

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
722 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye:

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a non-profit professional organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical sub-specialists, and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of infants, children, adolescents, and young adults, urges you to make the needs of children the highest priority during the nomination hearings of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Chairman.

The AAP has enjoyed a long, fruitful relationship with the CPSC in pursuit of our mutual goal of promoting the health and safety of children. The CPSC's regulation of consumer products is especially pertinent to the children and families served by pediatricians, as the agency plays a critical role in the regulation of products such as cribs, strollers, infant swings, high chairs, baby walkers, and toys. In 2005, 109 of the 397 recalls issued by the CPSC (over 28 percent) were for children's products, an average of two recalls per week.

As our nation's leading advocate for consumer safety, the CPSC Chairman must have an unimpeachable record of promoting consumer protection. Having scrutinized Michael Baroody's background and career, the AAP has concluded that he is not qualified to be an effective advocate for consumers. In more than a decade as Executive Vice President for the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), Mr. Baroody not only represented the interests of the nation's manufacturing firms – often in direct opposition to the interest of consumers – but led efforts to weaken the CPSC and opposed numerous initiatives to protect children and the public from unsafe products. The AAP is profoundly concerned that, if confirmed, Mr. Baroody would work to further attenuate the CPSC's regulatory activities, which could have serious consequences for children's safety.

As our nation's most vulnerable citizens, children are unable to protect themselves from unsafe products. The CPSC Chairman must be a tireless advocate for children's health and safety. Mr. Baroody's record demonstrates that he is a leader for industry, not consumers or children. We urge you to place the highest priority on the protection and safety of children and oppose the nomination of Michael Baroody as Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay E. Berkelhamer".

Jay E. Berkelhamer, MD, FAAP  
President

JB:cp