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SMALL BUSINESS

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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The Honorable John Thune  
Chairman  
Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation  
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation  
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson,

I write to request that the Senate Commerce Committee hold a hearing on the use of chemical flame retardants in children's car seats.

Parents are required by law to purchase car seats that meet the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA's) flammability standards.<sup>1</sup> Although there are many flame retardant chemicals, manufacturers are not required to disclose which chemicals are used in car seats. This is concerning because one flame retardant commonly found in foam used to make car seats is listed by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) as a probable carcinogen.

In fact, the CPSC banned this particular flame retardant from being used on children's garments in the 1970's, after a study by the National Cancer Institute found that the chemical may cause cancer.<sup>2</sup> CPSC also found "based on its own laboratory tests and other scientific information available," that this chemical "could be absorbed by children through the skin or by 'mouthing.'"<sup>3</sup>

Since children spend a great deal of time in their car seats, I believe the Senate Commerce Committee should use this hearing to investigate the health and safety impacts of using flame retardants in car seats and whether disclosure of the use of these chemicals is warranted.

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<sup>1</sup> 49 CFR 571.302, Standard No. 302; *Flammability of Interior Materials*.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cpsc.gov/en/Newsroom/News-Releases/1977/CPSC-Bans-TRIS-Treated-Childrens-Garments/>

<sup>3</sup> *See id.*

Fire safety is important, however, as consumers, parents should not be required to purchase car seats that may expose their children to harmful chemicals without their knowledge.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly A. Ayotte". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K" and a long, sweeping underline.

Kelly A. Ayotte  
U.S. Senator