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Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate
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Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hutchison, and members of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee.

I am honored by President Barack Obama's nomination of me to serve as Chairman of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. I thank the President for this tremendous opportunity and, if confirmed by the Senate, I will do my utmost to ensure the safety and well being of America's children and families.

I want to introduce to you my husband, Samuel. He and I recently celebrated our twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, and I thank him for his support and encouragement during this nomination process.

Both Samuel and I were born and raised in Georgia—he in Savannah and I in a small, rural town called Pineview. My mother, Bernice Rhodes Moore, was an elementary school teacher and my father, William Robert Moore, had a career in the United States Navy.

Consistent with the President Obama's approach to governance, if confirmed as Chairman, I will ensure that the Commission is operated in an open, transparent, and collaborative way and in a manner worthy of the American people. As the new Chairman, I will reassure America's families that their government can and will protect them from unknown or unforeseen dangers in the products they use. While emphasizing the life-saving mission of the Commission, I will also ensure that industry knows that their views will be heard and considered.

I want to assure you that as Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, I will be a partner with all of you in protecting the lives and health of our citizens.

My life's mission has been enhancing the quality of life for children and families in South Carolina. This mission has remained constant although I have worked in different venues and on many issues affecting the safety, health, and well being of the children and families of my state. Indeed, my public service will be the foundation for my work protecting and working for the American people—alongside all of you.

My first employment in South Carolina was with the State Department of Social Services, after I had taught elementary school for several years in

my native state of Georgia. My responsibilities at the State Department of Social Services involved licensing Head Start and other federally-funded childcare centers to ensure that the facilities protected the health and safety of children. I also represented the State Department of Social Services before committees in the South Carolina General Assembly to advocate for the passage of new legislation to increase the health, safety, and fire standards for childcare facilities and family and group childcare homes.

I then worked as the Director of Research for the Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Committee of the South Carolina House of Representatives. This Committee was responsible for developing legislation and approving regulations relating to health, human services, the environment, children and youth services, mental health, mental retardation, adult and juvenile correctional facilities, local government, and the state's National Guard.

It was through my work for this Committee that I first became knowledgeable about consumer advocacy and safety. Examples of legislation and regulations that I reviewed for the Committee included the Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Act, the Hazardous Waste Management Act, the Pollution Control Act, and the Drug Product Selection Act. Examples of regulatory issues reviewed annually by the Committee included controlled substances; food products; air, water, and soil pollution; asbestos; barrier free design; restaurant sanitation; and pyrotechnic safety.

During my tenure as Director of Research, I also served on numerous ad hoc committees to study issues for the General Assembly. I served on the state's first Hazardous Waste Advisory Committee to work out issues between the Department of Health and Environmental Control, advocates for the environment, and the business/industry community. This work led to the passage of South Carolina's first hazardous waste management regulations.

From 1986 to 1992, I practiced law with Sinkler & Boyd, P.A. and worked in the areas of health, environmental, and public interest law. During this time, I served as the chair of the Environmental and Natural Resources Section of the South Carolina Bar Association. My work in the environmental area included the regulation of underground storage tanks, the cleanup of property contaminated by hazardous waste, and the potential environmental hazards associated with real estate loans.

From 1999 to 2007, I served as South Carolina's State Superintendent of Education and directed and managed a state agency of nearly 1000 employees. The agency was responsible for administering federal and

state education programs; providing training and technical assistance to educators in the state's public schools; certifying teachers and other educators; approving architectural and construction plans for school buildings; operating a statewide school and transportation system; overseeing a statewide meals program; and leading initiatives to maintain safe and healthy schools.

I believe that my work as a child advocate, an educator, an environmental lawyer, and a public servant has prepared me well to chair the Consumer Product Safety Commission. And I am well aware that I would assume the chairmanship of an agency that is faced with challenges.

Some of these challenges include implementing in a timely manner the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008, ensuring the safety of the surge of imports from countries that do not adequately regulate the safety of their manufactured goods, and accrediting a worldwide network of third-party laboratories to certify the safety of consumer goods globally.

If confirmed, I will make the implementation of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 my highest priority. I pledge to regularly inform this committee and Congress about our progress, and to work with you in an effort to meet the statutory deadlines and avoid unnecessary delays.

Regular and timely public communication is critical to keeping the public informed about consumer product safety. The Act recognizes this by requiring the Commission to establish a publicly available, searchable, internet-accessible Consumer Product Safety Database that will allow consumers the opportunity to provide the Commission with information on possible defective products. As I understand it, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration already has a similar model database on automobile safety that is accessible through its website. If confirmed as Chairman of the Commission, I will oversee the implementation of this database to make certain that it is created in a timely fashion and is easily accessible by the public.

Accrediting a worldwide network of third-party laboratories responsible for certifying that a children's product complies with U.S. safety standards will increase the enforcement abilities of the Commission. When the CPSC began operations in 1973, most consumer products were manufactured in the United States. From 1997 to 2007, imports increased over 200 percent and currently two-thirds of all U.S. consumer product recalls are of imported products. The vast majority of the recalled imports are from China. Through accreditation and continually

monitoring third-party laboratories, the CPSC can significantly increase surveillance of imported products.

In addition, through additional funding appropriated by Congress and the passage of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act, more resources are now available to monitor the certification of imports, hire more inspectors at the ports, and work collaboratively with the Customs Service on dangerous imports. I am also optimistic that the CPSC can increase the number of memorandum of agreements with countries that send imports to the United States and provide more training for domestic and foreign manufactures to guarantee compliance with the Commission's rules and regulations.

In closing, I want to assure you as Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, I will be a partner with all of you in protecting the lives and health of our citizens. I want to work with you to improve the operations of the Commission and to ensure that both our domestic and foreign manufacturers are fully informed on how to meet the requirements of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act and other statutes enforced by the Commission. If confirmed, I commit to you that under my leadership the Commission will operate in an open, fair, and evenhanded manner and will invite participation by the public, consumer advocacy organizations, and industry.

Thank you for your attention today, and for your full and fair consideration of my nomination. I would be happy to answer any questions.