



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

December 11, 2007

Hon. John D. Dingell, Chairman
Chairman
United States House of Representatives
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Hon. Joe Barton, Ranking Member
Ranking Member
United States House of Representatives
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2109 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Dingell and Ranking Member Barton:

I write to express my support for H.R. 4040. If approved, this legislation would protect children by reducing lead levels in consumer products and would add accountability by requiring third-party product safety testing.

Recent product recalls and media reports indicate that lead in toys is a widespread problem—particularly among imported products. Unfortunately, the current system has not prevented harmful products from reaching store shelves, homes, or children's hands.

As the state's chief law enforcement official, I am dedicated to protecting children. With that in mind, I strongly support provisions of H.R. 4040 that lower the allowable amount of lead in children's products. Equally important, H.R. 4040 requires that these products be subject to mandatory third-party testing and safety certification. This process will ensure that toys do not contain illegal—and dangerous—amounts of lead. As you know, sound scientific evidence demonstrates that lead is highly toxic and, even in very small doses, can affect young children's neurological systems.

The State of Texas is ready and willing to partner with federal authorities to enforce the law. Thus, I also support giving states the authority to enforce these heightened federal standards. There are multiple precedents for these state-federal enforcement models. Specifically, the Office of the Attorney General regularly—and actively—enforces the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), the federal Telemarketing Sales Rule (TSR), and the federal Telephone Customer Protection Act (TCPA), among others.

Enacting tougher standards that the states can enforce will undoubtedly improve our ability to protect Texas children. I strongly urge the Congress to pass H.R. 4040. Together, we can ensure a safe, healthy, and bright future for our children.

Sincerely,

Greg Abbott
Attorney General of Texas