



May 28, 2013

Dear Retailers:

We are writing to share our concerns about the “Mind the Store Campaign” which is aimed at pressuring retailers to remove thousands of products families rely on each day from store shelves. We urge you to stand firm against this well-funded, anti-science campaign of fear. Families don’t need false alarmism; they need access to safe and affordable products that make their lives easier, safer, cleaner and more comfortable.

The Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families organization, which is leading the effort to ban these products, is notorious for spreading incomplete information about chemicals. While the organization portrays itself as a consumer “watchdog,” it is better described as an attack dog determined to destroy free enterprise and consumer choice. The organization has a pattern of relying on junk science; it capitalizes on the natural anxieties of parents by spreading scary stories about a long list of common products, such as cleaning supplies, furniture, children’s toys, food packaging, water bottles, and other products commonly sold in stores today.

The organization’s latest stunt is to pressure the nation’s top 10 retailers into removing certain products that contain “hazardous” chemicals. The organization recklessly demands retailers “identify whether a specific list of hazardous chemicals are in the products they sell, and if so, to develop a plan to remove them.”

Removing these products from the market will be a huge cost to shoppers and could even put consumers at risk. Among the chemicals the campaign wants removed from are phthalates, bisphenol-A, formaldehyde, and certain flame retardants. The campaign is quick to suggest these chemicals are hazardous at the level consumers are exposed, despite the significant body of scientific evidence to the contrary. Yet, the campaign fails to inform consumers that these chemicals often make products safer.

For example, flame retardants, which are now common in furniture and building materials, are largely responsible for the sharp decline in household fires since the 1970s. Formaldehyde, which is used in personal care products, helps prevent bacterial growth. Phthalates are added to plastics to make toys less breakable. And bisphenol-A, a chemical used in food packaging, safeguards against deadly botulism in canned food.

If retailers bow to this campaign, products won’t just become less safe, they will be harder to find and much more expensive. Consumers are already facing higher prices for food, fuel, and everyday products. Consumers who want to purchase products free of certain chemicals are

able to do so since there is no shortage of alternative products in the marketplace. Yet, those people should not dictate the informed choices the rest of us make.

Please join us in pushing back on these irresponsible organizations and stand firm in your commitment to continue offering Americans the products they choose, at a reasonable price.

Sincerely,

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