

Statement from Acting Chairman Ann Marie Buerkle  
APA Annual Conference  
October 4, 2017  
San Diego, CA

Good morning. I am so sorry that I am not able to be there with all of you. As you may know, my Senate confirmation hearing to serve as permanent Chairman of CPSC was held last week and this morning is my Senate mark-up. In between these two events, I received many requests for additional information as well as document production. So, unfortunately, I had to miss this year's meeting. I am very eager to complete the Senate confirmation process so that I will be able to lead CPSC in the future.

I especially want to thank Julie Heckman for reading this statement and for all of her efforts in facilitating my participation. Julie, thank you for your understanding of the confirmation process.

It is the entrepreneurial spirit of organizations like yours that make this country great. It is the hard work, sacrifice, and commitment of people like you that keep the American Dream alive and well in this country. I appreciate your work and your contribution to the United States' economy.

Education is one of my priorities. It is not always the only answer, but I believe education and outreach should be an important focal point of CPSC. Increasing consumer awareness of potential hazards as well as publicizing safety solutions through information and education campaigns, such as our award-winning Pool Safely and Anchor It! campaigns, will have a positive impact.

American Pyrotechnics Safety and Education Foundation's "Celebrate Safely" campaign is a proactive measure to educate consumers, particularly young people, about fireworks safety. The campaign is impressive, and I am grateful to APA and the foundation for keeping me and CPSC in the loop on how the campaign is evolving and working. As I said, education is not always the final or only answer, but increased consumer awareness has a positive impact on safety. Thank you for your commitment and all of your efforts. I want to specifically give recognition to my friend and former CPSC colleague, Inez Tenenbaum. Inez has been an advocate for the safety of the public for much of her professional career. Inez was an integral part of the "Celebrate Safely" project. Her contributions and passion for this project and consumer safety are inspiring and have truly made a difference in the lives of countless people, especially children.

Education is not exclusive to consumers though. Part of our mission of safety should be better education of the regulated community on how to best comply with our rules and regulations. If we can keep industry informed about our interpretations of safety requirements, best practices, the importance of managing supply chains, and being engaged with CPSC, we can help design safety into products. As Chairman of the CPSC, you can expect to see more educational as well as engagement opportunities for the regulated community.

In closing, I want to give you a quick update on fireworks. As most of you I am sure know, on January 25, 2017, the Commission voted to approve a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPR). The agency has received more than 2,400 public comments on the NPR, and staff is currently reviewing and evaluating them to inform how best to move forward on this issue.

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Thank you all for your engagement with our agency. We greatly benefit from stakeholder expertise and input. My door is always open. If I can ever be of any service or assistance to you, I hope that you will let me know.

Again, I am sorry I cannot be with you in person and I thank Julie for letting me provide this brief statement. My best wishes to all of you for an informative and useful conference.

Thank you.