

Consumer spending has historically represented about 70 percent of the U.S. economy, with a third of that spent on consumer products. That means nearly a quarter of our entire economy is involved in the exchange of consumer products. That's the math of why we must keep our consumer goods safe. The human side of the equation is much simpler: our children's toys must be safe.

As our economy has grown over the years, the number of products we import has vastly expanded. At the same time, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, responsible for protecting the public against injury associated with consumer products, has actually shrunk. Since 2004, the number of people working for the Consumer Product Safety Commission has fallen by 15 percent. The agency is operating with a workforce of around 400, about half the staff it had when it opened its doors in 1979.

At the same time, we've seen huge numbers of product recalls. Some 20 million toys from China have been recalled this year alone.

Democrats are working in Congress to enhance the Consumer Product Safety Commission's ability to enforce product safety and strengthen our surveillance of imported products. The amount of products imported into our country has doubled in the past decade, making proper oversight more important than ever.

A bill was introduced in the House of Representatives last month to improve consumer product safety standards for children's products and to reauthorize and modernize the Consumer Product Safety Commission. The bill would increase the commission's funding by \$20 million over the next two years and allow an addition \$20 millions to be spent to renovate, repair, reconstruct and re-equip the agency.

As the holiday season approaches, child safety issues will be front and center. I'm proud to be working from Washington to protect our children and look forward to keeping up the fight.

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