



National Center for Healthy Housing

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTHY HOUSING BOARD MEMBER TESTIFIES BEFORE THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, TRADE, AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

*Don Ryan's Testimony Supports the Formaldehyde Standards for Composite Wood Act to
Protect American Families from the Harmful Effects of Formaldehyde Exposure*

Columbia, MD (March 18, 2010) – Don Ryan, a Board member and one of the founders of the nonprofit National Center for Healthy Housing (NCHH), testified before the House Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection in support of the *Formaldehyde Standards for Composite Wood Products Act*. The bi-partisan bill directs EPA to fast-track national standards under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) to reduce formaldehyde emissions from composite wood products by more than half beginning in 2012.

In his remarks, Ryan praised California for leading the way in establishing aggressive standards to reduce formaldehyde and commended North American manufacturers of wood products for their aggressive compliance with the California rules. He went on to explain the limits to what State leadership can accomplish, especially when it comes to enforcing compliance in the worldwide market for composite wood products. This bill and its Senate companion, S. 1660, would direct EPA to extend the public health protections of the California standards nationally as quickly as possible and strengthen their enforcement to protect American families from the harmful effects of exposure to formaldehyde, which is an irritant, allergen and cancer risk.

H.R. 4805, the *Formaldehyde Standards for Composite Wood Products Act*, sets limits on the use of formaldehyde in household furniture and other standard household items including paneling, flooring, cabinets, doors, shelving, molding, and countertops. Composite wood products include particleboard, medium density fiberboard and hardwood plywood; products made from pieces, chips, particles, fibers or veneers bonded together with a resin.

“The *Formaldehyde Standards for Composite Products Wood Act* takes a major step forward by addressing one of the most significant sources of formaldehyde emissions in a way that is practical, protective and enforceable,” Ryan said before the House Committee. “Advocates for safe and healthy housing, including NCHH, fully support the legislation and thank Representatives Matsui and Ehlers for introducing it. We also encourage the Subcommittee and the full Committee on Energy and Commerce to support this bill and recommend its early approval the full House.”

This bill directs EPA to issue regulations based on the California Air Resources Board standards to require third-party certification of formaldehyde standards for composite wood products. Additionally, the bill directs EPA to coordinate enforcement with the Commissioner of Customs and Border Protection and other relevant federal departments and agencies. Exemptions from this rule include secondhand products and antiques and wood products that do not emit formaldehyde.

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The National Center for Healthy Housing (NCHH) is the only national scientific and technical non-profit organization dedicated to creating healthy and safe homes for America's children through practical and proven steps. NCHH develops scientifically valid and practical strategies to make homes safe from hazards, to alert low- income families about housing-related health risks, and to help them protect their children.