

CHARLIE MELANCON
3RD DISTRICT, LOUISIANA

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY
AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



Congress of the United States
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Washington, DC 20515

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March 18, 2010

The Honorable Kelvin Cochran
U.S. Fire Administrator
United States Fire Administration
Federal Emergency Management Agency
16825 S. Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

Dear Administrator Cochran:

We write today to request your assistance in providing for the safety of families across the nation whose homes are tainted with defective Chinese drywall.

As you know, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has received almost 3,000 complaints of defective drywall from families in 37 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The CPSC estimates, however, that 7 million sheets of Chinese drywall were imported between 2000 and 2009 — enough to have built tens of thousands of homes.

In preliminary studies, the CPSC has established a “strong association” between chemicals emitted by toxic drywall and corrosion of copper wiring in homes. In addition to the fire hazards associated with damaged electrical wiring, corrosion can also lead to the deterioration of smoke alarm systems and fire sprinklers - compounding the risk of damage and injury from fire. The CPSC has signaled concern for these risks with the publication of an *Alert to Fire Safety Professionals*, asking these officials to report to the CPSC any incidence of fire that may be connected with the presence of drywall in a home.

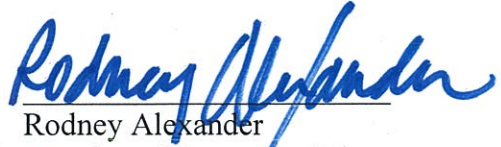
While this is an important first step, conclusive research as well as a comprehensive public awareness effort is warranted. We request that U.S. Fire Administration scientists work with the CPSC to continue and expand the ongoing research on the fire hazard associated with defective drywall. Additionally, we request that you provide public guidance for homeowners, outlining steps that may be taken to reduce fire risks in homes containing toxic drywall, and amplify efforts to alert homeowners of these risks.

While the CPSC continues to develop a remediation protocol for homes contaminated with Chinese drywall, it is crucial that we do everything in our power to ensure that affected residents are safe. We believe that further research and increased public awareness are important steps toward protecting families from harm, and we appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

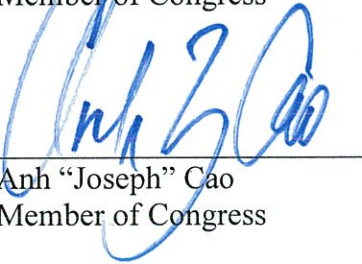
Many thanks,



Charlie Melancon
Member of Congress



Rodney Alexander
Member of Congress



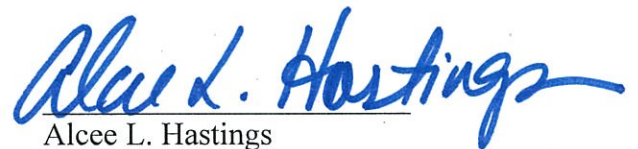
Anh "Joseph" Cao
Member of Congress



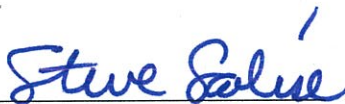
Bill Cassidy
Member of Congress



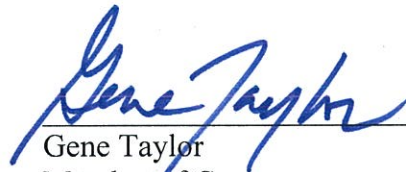
Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



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