

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 12, 2011

The Honorable Spencer Bachus
Chairman
House Committee on Financial Services
2129 Rayburn House Office Building

The Honorable Barney Frank
Ranking Member
House Committee on Financial Services
2129 Rayburn House Office Building

Dear Chairman Bachus, and Ranking Member Frank.

On behalf of our constituents, we formally request that the House Committee on Financial Services hold a hearing on the issue of contaminated drywall manufactured in China. This drywall was imported into the United States and used in home construction in the United States from approximately 2004 to 2008.

Contaminated Chinese drywall has destroyed the homes and financial lives of many of our constituents, leaving them with no recourse or remedy to address this serious problem. Chinese drywall contains toxic and semi-toxic substances which have released harmful gasses into the atmosphere of thousands of homes. These gases have been linked to adverse health conditions. In addition, the drywall has caused physical damage to homes by corroding many standard household systems including copper and brass pipes and fittings, fire alarms, gas service piping, electrical distribution components, and fire suppression systems. We have seen these homes first hand and they are unlivable. More importantly, these conditions are not the fault of the homeowners.

Due to health and home safety issues caused by the contaminated drywall, many homeowners have moved into rental homes and are now in the untenable financial position of simultaneously renting while paying a mortgage for a home they cannot live in. To make matters worse, homes contaminated by the drywall are now below market value, inhibiting homeowners from selling their properties; thus, many homeowners are underwater on their mortgages. Faced with this situation, some families have made the difficult choice to walk away from their mortgages and some have been brought to financial ruin.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is the agency leading the federal response to this crisis. They have compiled a database of more than 3,700 homes spread across 41 states, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia affected by this problem. Because these numbers are compiled through homeowners self-reporting to the CPSC, it is reasonable to believe that the problem is much more extensive. We are deeply concerned that the existing housing crisis may become even worse as more homeowners suffering under financial strain caused by contaminated drywall continue to default on their mortgages.

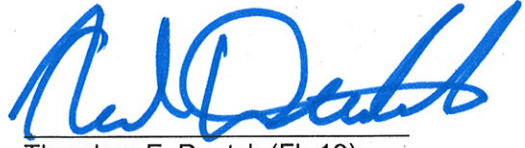
As the committee of jurisdiction over housing and financial institutions, we request that the House Committee on Financial Services hold a hearing which includes representatives from the Chinese manufacturers, importers, builders, financial institutions, the CPSC, and homeowners themselves. With few exceptions, there has been very little action taken by any of the entities involved to ameliorate the financial crisis this defective drywall has created for homeowners. In addition, the CPSC released its long anticipated guidelines for remediation last month. We believe that a hearing is needed to evaluate the guidelines and to explore a path forward for homeowner relief and restoration.

It is incumbent on the United States Congress to investigate the serious wrong that has been done and to evaluate what steps can be taken to provide appropriate relief for the thousands of homeowners who carry both the least fault for the situation and the greatest burden. We look forward to working with you on this endeavor, and we appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



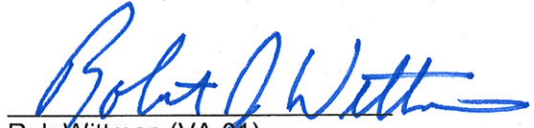
Scott Rigell (VA-02)
Member of Congress



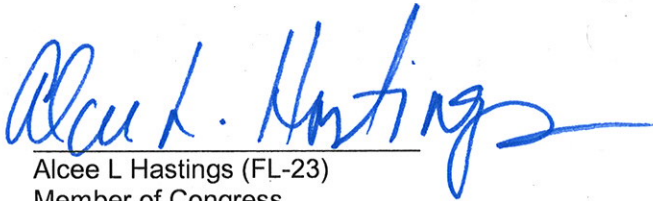
Theodore E. Deutch (FL-19)
Member of Congress



Bobby Scott (VA-03)
Member of Congress



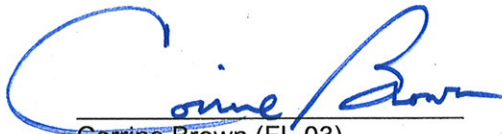
Rob Wittman (VA-01)
Member of Congress



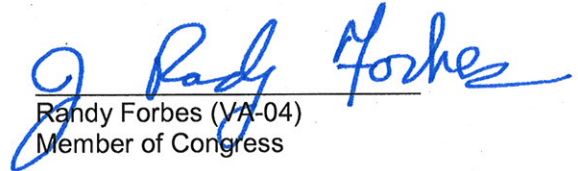
Alcee L. Hastings (FL-23)
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL-20)
Member of Congress



Corrine Brown (FL-03)
Member of Congress



Randy Forbes (VA-04)
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart (FL-21)
Member of Congress



Connie Mack (FL-14)
Member of Congress