

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 6, 2011

The Honorable Ron Kirk  
United States Trade Representative  
600 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Kirk,

On behalf of our constituents, we formally request that the Office of the United States Trade Representative vigorously take up 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 gases 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.

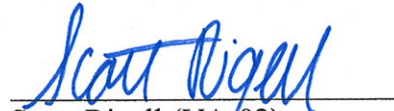
Due to health and home safety issues caused by the contaminated drywall, many homeowners have moved into rental homes and are now in the untenable financial position of simultaneously renting while paying a mortgage for a home they cannot live in. To make matters worse, homes contaminated by the drywall 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. CPSC Chairman Inez Tenenbaum has visited China and brought up the drywall issue with her Chinese counterparts but has yet to receive a satisfactory response.


It is clear that the burden for this crisis, and the responsibility to compensate homeowners for their losses, rests solely on the Chinese manufacturers of this contaminated drywall. We hold the

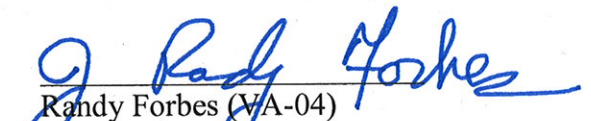
view of our constituents that these companies must be held to account for the effects of their hazardous product. Our courts have limited ability to impose or enforce judgments against these foreign companies. We request a summary of actions taken by your office on this issue to date and your plan of action to hold the Chinese manufacturers accountable. We look forward to your timely response so that we may relay your efforts to the homeowners in our districts who have been suffering the hazardous effects of contaminated drywall without relief for more than two years.


Sincerely,

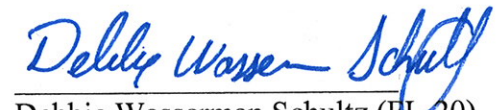
  
Scott Rigell (VA-02)  
Member of Congress

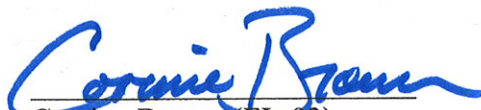
  
Theodore E. Deutch (FL-19)  
Member of Congress

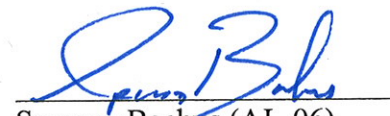
  
Bobby Scott (VA-03)  
Member of Congress

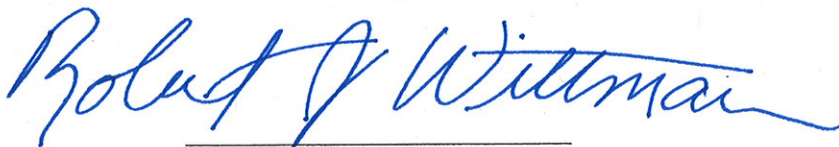
  
Randy Forbes (VA-04)  
Member of Congress

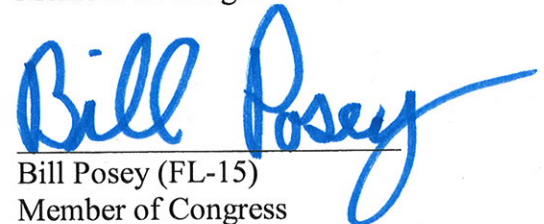
  
Alcee L. Hastings (FL-23)  
Member of Congress

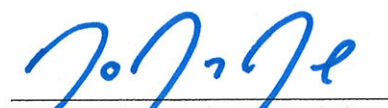
  
Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL-20)  
Member of Congress

  
Corrine Brown (FL-03)  
Member of Congress

  
Spencer Bachus (AL-06)  
Member of Congress

  
Rob Wittman (VA-01)  
Member of Congress

  
Bill Posey (FL-15)  
Member of Congress

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