

**Statement of Marietta S. Robinson
Nominee to be a Member of the
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission**

Good morning Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Hutchison, and distinguished Members of the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today as a nominee for Commissioner of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). I am extremely honored that President Obama has nominated me for this position. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Chairman Inez Tenenbaum and Commissioners Nancy Nord, Robert Adler, and Ann Northup to continue the excellent bipartisan work they have carried out in the past few years to implement the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (CPSIA) and keep consumers, and particularly children, safe from potentially hazardous consumer products.

Before I begin my testimony I would like to take a brief moment to introduce my family. Sitting behind me is my son, Steven Robinson, who is Executive Dean of Planning, Research, and Quality at Mott Community College in Flint, Michigan; my daughter-in-law, Katherine; my grandchildren, Owen and Julia; and my nephew, Kyle Clark. My daughter, Renee, is Vice-President of Marketing for a Swedish software company and lives in Stockholm, Sweden with my Swedish son-in-law, Viktor, and my other three grandchildren, Hugo, Vera and Erik. While the Swedish part of my family and my father, Dr. Herbert Sebree, who lives in Seattle, are unable to attend today, I want to thank them and my family who is here for their wonderful support throughout the nomination process.

I am very sad that my incredible late husband, James K. Robinson, is not here with us today. Jim and I both grew up in Michigan and were married for 28 wonderful years until his death in August 2010. He was an inspiration to so many and had a career that included several stints of public service, including serving as Assistant Attorney General (AAG) of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice in the Clinton Administration. Jim was a tower of strength and support for me throughout my career and would have been so proud to be here today.

I approach this position with more than 30 years of legal experience. I received my undergraduate degree with High Distinction from The University of Michigan-Flint, my law degree from University of California Los Angeles School of Law, and have been a litigator since 1978. Before starting my own firm in 1989, I was voted into the partnerships of two of Michigan's most highly respected law firms, one that, in litigation, primarily represents corporate defendants and one that primarily represents plaintiffs. During my career, I have represented businesses of every size and injured individuals in just about every type of civil litigation.

In addition to my law practice, from 1989 to 1997, I served as a federally-appointed Trustee of the Dalkon Shield Trust, which provided compensation to consumers injured through the use of a defective intrauterine device (IUD). Working with my fellow Trustees, we devised a system that distributed \$2.3 billion in compensation to more than 300,000 claimants in more than 120 countries. These claimants had injuries ranging from simple use of the IUD to infertility, death, and brain-injured children. At the conclusion, we were able to give a ninety percent *pro rata* distribution to the claimants, in addition to the settlement amounts already paid due to the responsible way in which we ran the Trust. I am very proud to have played a leadership role in what is generally regarded as one of the most successful mass-tort claim facilities to date.

In 2010, I became the first woman President of the International Society of Barristers, an invitation-only group of approximately 650 plaintiffs and defense trial attorneys, who share that they try jury cases, do so with honesty and integrity, and have achieved a very high level of respect from fellow lawyers and judges.

If confirmed, I believe that I will be able to use my diverse professional experience to make a number of substantive contributions at the CPSC.

Specifically, I hope to focus on three main areas.

First, I look forward to working with Chairman Tenenbaum and my fellow Commissioners to complete the final rules and requirements of the CPSIA and a recently enacted package of amendments to that law, Public Law 112-28. In doing so, I want to assure the Committee that I will approach this task with an open door and listen carefully to all stakeholders. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Commission on rules that are both fair and highly protective of consumers of all ages.

Second, I believe one of the most important things the Commission can and must focus on doing is enforcing existing product safety requirements and making sure that violative products never enter this country in the first place. The Commission has recently enhanced its Office of Import Surveillance, which puts CPSC "boots on the ground" in select U.S. ports of entry. This office also shares data with U.S. Customs and Border Protection in order to further target potentially dangerous products. If confirmed, I look forward to working with my fellow Commissioners to further strengthen this critical program.

Third, I believe outreach and education are critical elements of the Commission's work. Rules and regulations are important, but changing attitudes and behaviors are also key elements of preventing tragedies such as tip-over incidents, where a small child climbs on furniture and causes a television or other heavy object to fall off, often resulting in serious injury or death. If confirmed, I look forward to leveraging the Commission's existing resources, as well as its social media tools, to get the word out that prevention is better than reaction.

Finally, if confirmed, I look forward to working with CPSC's talented professional staff. For a small agency, CPSC is privileged to have some of the nation's best scientific and technical staff. They are unsung heroes in the product safety world, and it would be an honor to work with them.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.