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**Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation**  
**United States Senate**  
**August 5, 2009**

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Hutchison, and members of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee. I deeply appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today, especially this week with all of the important matters competing for your attention.

I am honored to have been nominated by President Barack Obama to serve as a Commissioner of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. I thank the President for the opportunity to serve. If confirmed by the Senate, I will do my best to see that the Consumer Product Safety Commission effectively and efficiently protects the well being of our children and families and enforces the laws for which it has responsibility.

I want to introduce to you my husband, Woody. He and I have been married for forty years. We met on our first day of college, he as a student at Notre Dame and I as a freshman at St. Mary's College which is across the street.

Our lives have been a special adventure: we were blessed with six wonderful children, two of them adopted; Woody started his own business with only seven employees, moving into a building with a dirt floor. We had some very lean years. Two of our children are cancer survivors, and one very sadly died suddenly of a heart attack three years ago. I want to thank my loving husband for being my dearest friend and best adviser throughout my life and my career. I am not sure this is what he pictured when we were married in 1969.

I grew up in Louisville, Kentucky, the second of eleven children, ten girls and one boy. You can see why we all thought it was a "women's world". My parents were happy, hard working, organized, and made raising eleven children look easy and fun. We were all encouraged to study hard, participate in athletics, volunteer at an early age and live a meaningful life. We took different paths; I was the only one even remotely involved in politics. One of my sisters, Mary T. Meagher, is being inducted into the Olympic Hall of Fame next week in Chicago as a three time Olympian and a twenty year World Record holder in swimming.

If I am confirmed as a Commissioner, I want to assure the Committee that I will serve independently and faithfully to protect American families from unsafe products, enforce the laws that the Commission must enforce, ensure transparency to all concerned and do my part to build a collaborative environment with those at the Commission.

First, I would like to address my record of independence. The Commission is comprised of two Commissioners from each party and the Chair from the party of the President. However, I am sure you expect Commissioners to rise above their party designation and act as a team to protect the American people. I believe that I have a record of independence and wanted to share a few examples:

- In the Kentucky State Legislature, I introduced the first law that limited the age when children could buy tobacco products. When I was elected in 1987, in Kentucky, if you could walk, you could legally enter a store and buy a pack of cigarettes at any age. Republicans and Democrats alike in our Legislature supported the tobacco industry because of our tobacco farmers. I quietly hammered away at the health issues and held my ground and influenced both the legislature and the executive branch to begin addressing these health issues. When I was first elected to Congress, Louisville was still home to the world headquarters of Brown and Williamson and had a Philip Morris plant that employed 4000 employees. Throughout my career in Congress, I chose not to accept contributions from the tobacco companies because I believe that their products are inherently unsafe.
- In Congress, I felt that banks should not also be our real estate agents, believing that it could lead to unwise loans to families, jeopardizing their financial well being in order to realize short-term gains in commissions. Although the banking community had been one of my most supportive industries, from that time forward, the industry supported my opponents.
- The pharmaceutical companies had been one of my largest contributors until I became concerned about the discrepancy between the price American families paid for prescriptions and the price paid in other developed countries for the same medicine. Thus, I supported allowing American families and industry the right to purchase drugs in the international marketplace. My independence cost me the support of that industry.

My life's record of public service has been one of tackling tough and complicated issues, looking for solutions that are innovative and fair to all concerned. If I am confirmed, I will be joining the Commission at a very exciting and challenging time. I look forward to being a part of the solution and making a positive contribution toward meeting those challenges.

The position for which the President has nominated me was created in the 2008 Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act. This legislation created new, sweeping responsibilities for the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Its implementation will require new rules, new standards, new testing laboratories, new ways to certify imports and new enforcement actions.

If I am confirmed, I will be joining the Commission under the guidance of the new Chairwoman, Inez Tenenbaum. I want to thank Chairman Tenenbaum for graciously

reaching out to me and congratulating me on my nomination, all the way from Singapore where she is attending product safety meetings. I would do all in my power to be a valuable team member. She is already setting in motion a collaborative effort to address the current challenges and I would hope to support her efforts and contribute to meeting these challenges.

Chairman Tenenbaum testified that one of her highest priorities would be to work closely with the committee, keeping it informed of progress to meet statutory deadlines. I understand how important that is. As a former Member of Congress, I remember how completely frustrating it was to need an answer from an Agency and not be able to get it. I understand, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Hutchison, that you begin to hear from your colleagues if agencies do not respond, fail to meet deadlines or have constituents that feel that their issues and views are not even heard. If I am confirmed, I will bring that firsthand knowledge and respect for this committee's perspective to my service.

Previously, as a member of the Kentucky State Legislature, I had an opportunity to address the challenges of implementing major reforms. In 1990, the Kentucky Legislature passed a sweeping reform of their education system, the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA). It completely revamped funding, the curriculum, teacher training, governance, applied new innovative statewide student testing, and a rewards and sanctions system to hold schools and school districts accountable. For many years it was held up as a national standard.

But, as this committee well knows, new sweeping laws are tough to implement. The Governor and the legislative leadership appointed three legislative members to a new public-private partnership, the Partnership for Education Reform, to facilitate the implementation of the new law. As an appointee of the Speaker of the House (who was not a Republican), I had an opportunity to work on the day-to-day issues to meet the deadlines, address the criticisms (people affected by change often resist change but sometimes unforeseen problems arise—the key is to know the difference), stretch the funding to meet the mandates, develop training, measure progress with respect to time and effectiveness, communicate with the public and answer questions from my fellow members of the Legislature who wondered what was taking so long.

I believe the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act is meeting the same challenges. It needs leaders who are determined to implement it fairly, as it was intended to be applied, address the problems, listen to those it affects, find creative, affordable and timely solutions and ensure that this law does exactly what the Congress intended: provide better protection for American families. If I am confirmed I will use my talents and experience to live up to your expectations for the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Today, more than two thirds of all consumer products are imported. That is an enormous difference from 1973 when the CPSC was created and began protecting American families and children. The Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act provides new resources and authority to ensure that imported products meet American safety standards.

Currently two thirds of all product recalls are imports, so there is good reason for the Commission to efficiently and effectively address the question of imports.

If I am confirmed, I will look for innovative ways to meet this enormous challenge of imports, making every dollar we spend a good investment for safety. Today, emerging technologies create new and different opportunities to test, check, track and protect the American public. If the Commission builds on cooperative efforts with other countries, expanding the use of independent third party laboratories for testing and better technology to track what comes in through our ports, we can do more with the resources you have given the Commission.

In closing, I would like to return to the beginning of my testimony. I have served in the Kentucky Legislature for nine years and then in Congress for ten years and in all those years I felt that my degree in Economics and my professional work was only half of what I brought to each challenge. The other part was being the mother of six children. When our children were young, they only received toys twice a year: on their birthdays and Christmas and even that was a financial challenge. I worried about what my children needed and how I was going to pay for it. It never occurred to me that I should also worry about the safety of the toy. I had never heard of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, but I had faith in the American system of protection.

Families need to have faith in the system again. They have to be able to count on us. If I am confirmed, I will do everything possible to think of the families I am responsible to protect as my own.

Thank you and I look forward to answering any questions that you may have.