



News

U.S. Rep. Adam Putnam (Fla.-12)
Central Florida: Hillsborough, Osceola and Polk counties

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Putnam bill would improve child product safety law

WASHINGTON – Congressman Adam Putnam (R-Fla.) today announced he has introduced legislation to improve a child protection law by correcting flaws that could make it more difficult for needy people to purchase safe and affordable goods such as second-hand clothing

“Our government must take an aggressive stance to require the highest product safety standards, particularly in relation to the safety and well-being of children,” said Putnam. “But consumer product mandates must target those goods and products that truly pose risks to children.”

The new law, the Consumer Products Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA), which went into effect this month, was intended to protect the safety and well-being of children from hazardous contaminants such as lead. Putnam said its unintended consequences, however, could unduly affect those most needy in our society, while not focusing on those products that pose the most significant risk to children.

The CPSIA was worded so broadly that churches, charitable organizations and stores selling second-hand clothing could face steep legal liabilities because they cannot afford to conduct tests on every article they sell. News media have already reported on thrift stores nationwide dumping thousands of articles of clothing rather than risk federal fines.

Putnam’s legislation, the Children’s Product Safety Enhancement and Clarification Act, would give the Consumer Product Safety Commission leeway to give special consideration to thrift, consignment and charitable stores which sell used goods when evaluating the risks and benefits. The measure would also direct the agency to work cooperatively with small and family-owned businesses, and would exempt low-risk items such as hand-me-down and second-hand clothing from testing requirements.

“The safety of consumers, particularly of children, must be paramount,” said Putnam, “but we must also use common sense when we structure these regulations.” Since 2001, Putnam has represented Florida’s 12th Congressional District, which includes most of Polk County and portions of Hillsborough and Osceola counties.