



# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

May 4, 2009

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
722 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C.20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
123 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C.20510

Dear Chairman Inouye and Ranking Member Cochran:

As the Committee reviews President Obama's Fiscal Year 2009 Supplemental Appropriations request, we write to ask your consideration for the inclusion of emergency funding that will allow the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), in conjunction with other federal agencies, to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the health and safety impacts of faulty Chinese-made drywall on thousands of American consumers.

Since 2006, more than 550 million pounds of drywall have been imported to the United States from China. In the last 18 months, countless homeowners throughout the Gulf Coast region have reported noxious fumes and serious metal corrosion in air conditioning units, copper pipes and electrical wiring. In addition, a number of homeowners have also reported serious health issues that appear to be related to the drywall, including bloody noses, headaches, insomnia, and skin irritation. In total, the CPSC has received over 180 incident reports from 12 states and the District of Columbia, demonstrating that this is a problem not just on the Gulf Coast, but also a threat to homeowners across the country.

Preliminary testing has confirmed that the imported drywall is at the root of the problem, but these tests have not been able to pinpoint the problem substances in the drywall. With this in mind, we respectfully request that the Committee include \$2 million for the CPSC to fully investigate and evaluate the defective drywall. These funds would be used to do field studies, analyze the substances in the product and, most importantly, expedite lab results to provide clarity to impacted homeowners. Such tests would allow the Federal government to fully understand the scope of the health and public safety risks posed by this product. Funds would also allow the agency to set up a public information campaign on defective drywall, including a website and hotline to help consumers.

Attached, for your review, is a full breakdown of how these funds would be allocated within the CPSC. Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

Bill Nelson  
United States Senator

Mary L. Landrieu  
United States Senator

Attachment

## Estimated Chinese Drywall Investigation 2009 CPSC Costs

**Drywall Elemental Analysis:**

Potential reimbursement of EPA's Emergency Response Team (ERT) Lab \$175,000

**Drywall Chamber Emissions Study:**

Government Laboratory:  
 Start-up Costs and running of Phase I \$310,000  
 Phase II \$300,000

Additional equipment to expedite lab studies:  
 Gas Chromatograph/Mass Spectrometer \$250,000  
 Additional pre-conditioning chambers \$ 10,000

**Field Study (in-Home monitoring) - Contractor** \$500,000

**Component Metallurgic Analysis:**

Government Lab – Electrical/Gas Components \$ 30,000  
 TBD Laboratory – Fire Protection Components \$ 60,000

**Component Advanced Aging Analysis** \$ 70,000

**Functional Evaluation of Fire Protection Components** \$ 40,000

**Shipping Costs - Samples in Tedlar Bags to Lab, EPA** \$ 1,000

**Compliance Field Investigators (Two)** \$150,000

**Public Information:**

Web site design and build \$ 5,000  
 Automated e-mail response management system \$ 40,000  
 Hotline operations, inquiry response, FAQs, regular website updates \$ 60,000

**Travel:**

To Lab, to oversee Phase I and Phase II studies, 2 trips \$ 12,000  
 Visit to U.S. gypsum manufacturing plant, 1 trip (five staff) \$ 8,000  
 To China, to visit manufacturing plants, 2 trips (up to six staff) \$ 66,000

**Total** **\$2,087,000**