

[House and Senate Introduce 'SOFFA' ...Again](#)

May 10, 2019 - WASHINGTON, D.C. - Both houses of Congress have taken up SOFFA again, the **Safer Occupancy Furniture Flammability Act**. The American Home Furnishings Alliance (AHFA)-backed legislation would make California's Technical Bulletin 117-2013 a federal flammability standard.

SOFFA has bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. Representatives Doris Matsui (D-CA) and Morgan Griffith (R-VA) introduced the legislation today. Senators Roger Wicker (R-MS) and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) co-sponsored the Senate version, S1341, introduced on May 7.

"This issue has bipartisan and broad stakeholder support. We expect SOFFA to provide a legislative victory for all parties and, most importantly, a win for American consumers," said AHFA CEO Andy Counts.

TB 117-2013 outlines performance standards and methods for testing the smolder resistance of cover fabrics, barrier materials, filling materials and decking materials used in upholstered furniture. It was endorsed by a broad coalition of stakeholders, including AHFA, firefighters, fire scientists, environmentalists and consumer groups.

In October 2015, AHFA formally petitioned the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to adopt the performance standards and test methods prescribed by TB 117-2013 as a national, mandatory flammability standard for residential furniture. The agency subsequently directed its staff to prepare a briefing package evaluating the feasibility, benefits and costs of adopting the measure.

CPSC staff completed its analysis in September 2016. However, it recommended against adopting TB 117-2013 and instead advised the commissioners to pursue "alternative approaches that address the hazard through a combination of research, education and outreach, and voluntary standards efforts." To date, no alternative approaches to the TB 117-2013 standard have been proposed by the commission.

The CPSC's 2019 budget called for another briefing package, but no action other than "data analysis and technical review" is slated for 2020.

"By making TB 117-2013 a national standard, we can ensure that all upholstered residential furniture sold in the United States meets a rigorous fire safety threshold. SOFFA would mandate the best test methods and construction standards we have today but would not prohibit the CPSC from future rule making if new fire safety technologies become available," Counts said.

"(SOFFA) would create a clear federal standard on furniture flammability," said Griffith. "It would result in safer products for our homes and allow furniture manufacturers to make their products without worrying about a tangle of varying state regulations."

SOFFA was introduced in both houses in 2017-2018, but the 115th Congress adjourned in January 2019 with no action on the measure.

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