

[STURDY Act](#)

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Rep. Schakowsky Introduces Sturdy Act

The Bill Would Require CPSC to Adopt a Mandatory Furniture Stability Standard

April 23, 2019 - WASHINGTON, D.C. - Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) introduced the Stop Tip-Overs of Unstable, Risky Dressers on Youth (STURDY) Act of 2019 on April 10. The bill, H.R. 2211, would require the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to promulgate a mandatory stability standard for clothing storage furniture.

The American Home Furnishings Alliance (AHFA) supports a mandatory stability standard that will hold all manufacturers to the same safety specifications for clothing storage furniture. However, the CPSC has already begun work on a mandatory standard, making the STURDY Act unnecessary.

STURDY was first introduced in June 2016 by Schakowsky and Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA). The first version gave ASTM International 180 days to publish a “stronger” voluntary stability standard, which the CPSC could then choose to adopt as mandatory. If ASTM did not publish a voluntary standard deemed “adequate” within the specified time period, the bill required CPSC to issue a final, mandatory standard within about 18 months (540 days) of the bill’s passage.

The 114th Congress adjourned in January 2017 with no action on STURDY.

The new version of the legislation introduced last week directs CPSC to finalize a mandatory safety standard for clothing storage furniture within one year of the bill’s adoption.

Further, it specifies that the mandatory standard must include stability testing for all clothing storage furniture, regardless of height. The current voluntary standard applies to units over 30 inches, but a revision expected to be adopted this summer would reduce the minimum height of covered units to 27 inches.

The 2019 version of STURDY also requires that stability tests in the mandatory standard be designed to simulate the weight of a child up to 72 months of age.

The current voluntary standard, ASTM F2057-17, requires a 50-pound weight to be used in stability testing. This reflects the 95th percentile weight of a child up to 5 years of age (or 60 months).

Increasing the age range of children covered by the standard from 60 months to 72 months, or up to 6 years of age, would require increasing the test weight to 60 pounds, according to CPSC.

The STURDY Act of 2019 also requires additional product testing to “more closely simulate real world use.” Specifically, the legislation calls for tests that account for the impact of carpeting on clothing storage unit stability, the impact of loaded drawers and the impact of “dynamic force.”

“None of these proposed new tests have been defined yet nor determined to be feasible,” said AHFA CEO Andy Counts. For example, identifying a “standard” carpet and a “standard” carpet padding for use in every stability test could be particularly problematic.

“In order for a mandatory standard to be enforceable, the stability tests must be precise, so every manufacturer is able to conduct the tests exactly the same way,” Counts explained. “Whether a

company is located in the United States or overseas, whether they produce low cost furniture or luxury furniture, everyone must use specified test materials and methods to remove any guesswork and guarantee accurate results.”

AHFA member companies have been industry leaders in complying with ASTM F2057 since its adoption in 2000. Through involvement on the ASTM Subcommittee for Furniture Safety, AHFA and its member companies have worked in collaboration with CPSC staff and child safety advocates on the committee to adopt significant improvements to the voluntary standard.

“AHFA remains committed to working with CPSC to research meaningful new tests that can be standardized and incorporated into a mandatory standard,” said Counts.