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For more than 40 years, the American Home Furnishings Alliance has been a leading proponent of construction standards for residential upholstered furniture designed to help prevent the start and spread of fires in the home.

In the 1970s, AHFA spearheaded the technical research that resulted in development of construction techniques and material guidelines that combine to make upholstered furniture resistant to the number one cause of home fires involving upholstered furniture: a smoldering cigarette.

This smolder standard was championed for decades by furniture manufacturers participating in the Upholstered Furniture Action Council, and it served as the model for the recently updated flammability standard in the State of California known as Technical Bulletin 117-2013. When it was adopted in 2013, this standard was endorsed by a broad coalition of stakeholders, including furniture manufacturers, fire fighters, fire scientists, environmentalists and consumer groups.

On Thursday, November 2, Representative Morgan Griffith (R-VA) introduced the ***Safer Occupancy Furniture Flammability Act***, legislation that would require the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to adopt California Technical Bulletin 117-2013 as a federal flammability standard.

AHFA backs the bill, which provides a workable solution to the 40-year stalemate over upholstered furniture flammability at the CPSC. California's TB 117-2013 is a proven and effective standard that helps protect consumers and reduces the risk of upholstered furniture fires. It outlines performance standards and methods for testing the fire resistance of cover fabrics, barrier materials, filling materials and decking materials used in upholstered furniture.

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 CPSC from future rulemaking if new fire safety technologies become available.

AHFA supports research into how the materials that are used in home construction today – along with the materials used in common consumer products such as furniture – impact fire safety in American homes. This research can help homeowners become more aware of potential fire hazards and plan safe routes of escape in the event of a fire. Importantly, this type of research can also provide firefighters with insights and knowledge to more safely and effectively fight home fires.

Underwriters Laboratory conducted this type of research in 2012. However, UL has documented that the furnishings it created for the 2012 experiments – and for more recent home fire

demonstrations staged for television audiences – are not representative of all modern furnishings. Instead, these furnishings were specifically built to illustrate a worst-case fire scenario.

***About the American Home Furnishings Alliance:** For more than 100 years, the American Home Furnishings Alliance has been the voice of the residential furniture industry in Washington, D.C., and throughout the United States any time regulations impacting the industry are proposed, discussed or debated. Based in High Point, N.C., the organization now represents over 230 leading furniture manufacturers and distributors, plus about 150 suppliers to the furniture industry worldwide.*